

THESIS



This is to certify that the

dissertation entitled

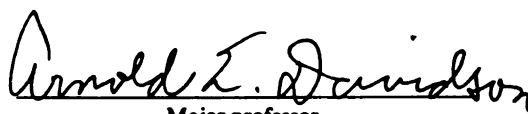
THE LADY AS CRIMINAL: ANTHONY TROLLOPE'S
ADAPTATION OF THE VICTORIAN SENSATION FORM

presented by

Nancy Beth Deal

has been accepted towards fulfillment
of the requirements for

Ph.D. degree in English


Major professor

Date May 3, 1988

PLACE IN RETURN BOX to remove this checkout from your record.
TO AVOID FINES return on or before date due.

DATE DUE	DATE DUE	DATE DUE
11.19.95		

MSU Is An Affirmative Action/Equal Opportunity Institution

**THE LADY AS CRIMINAL: ANTHONY TROLLOPE'S
ADAPTATION OF THE VICTORIAN SENSATION NOVEL**

By

Nancy Beth Deal

A DISSERTATION

**Submitted to
Michigan State University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of**

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

Department of English

1988

ABSTRACT

THE LADY AS CRIMINAL: ANTHONY TROLLOPE'S ADAPTATION OF THE VICTORIAN SENSATION NOVEL

By

Nancy Beth Deal

This dissertation examines Anthony Trollope's adaptation of the Victorian sensation novel in plots involving lady criminals as protagonists. The anti-heroines of these novels displace the conventional, sentimental heroine to provide the main interest of the story. Trollope continually juxtaposes the conventional heroine to a criminal anti-heroine and thereby subverts popular Victorian expectations for the novel. By making anti-heroines the centers of interest, Trollope implies that both fictional and social conventions are inadequate for women.

The Mid-Victorian sensation novel cast women as both victims and victimizers. The sensation heroine rebels against social conventions by openly embracing crime; she most often commits crimes against the family and the patriarchy. Although partly following the pattern of the sensation novel, Trollope domesticates the form by allowing his women criminals to participate in society. Rather than attack the patriarchal structure, these women attempt to infiltrate the patriarchy to gain for themselves the patriarchal advantages of wealth and power. Trollope uses marriage, particularly the mercenary marriage, as a means

for the criminal women characters to test their values against those of the general society.

The novels are discussed in chronological order to demonstrate that, throughout his career, Trollope included subversive characters and values as part of his thematic canon. The chronology also shows a progression in the complexity of the anti-heroines' crimes, a movement from obvious legal crimes to amorphous moral crimes. The progression suggests Trollope's growing understanding of the complexity of women's issues and represents a maturing criticism of Victorian social values, particularly the restrictions and double standards placed on women.

Copyright

By

Nancy Beth Deal

1988

TABLE OF CONTENTS

The Victorian Sensation Form and the Trollopian Tradition.....	p. 1
Dispossessing the Patriarchy: Lady Mason, Theft, and <u>Orley Farm</u>	p. 17
Claiming the Patriarchal Inheritance: "Lady Ongar's Revenge" in <u>The Claverings</u>	p. 43
Expanding the Form: "Wild-Cat" Anti-Heroines in <u>The Way We Live Now</u>	p. 68
Politicizing the Tradition: Lady Eustace and Dissimulation in <u>The Eustace Diamonds</u>	p. 94
The Immoral Hunt: Arabella Trefoil and the Mercenary Marriage.....	p. 123
The Lady as Criminal.....	p. 155

The Victorian Sensation Form and the Trollopian Tradition

Few Victorian novelists continue to stir critical debate in the same manner as Anthony Trollope. Immortalized for his "complete appreciation of the usual,"¹ Trollope's critical reputation might likely seem similar to the position of other minor literary figures, such as Disraeli or Mrs. Oliphant. Instead, Trollope elicits continual critical revision. James Kincaid traces the change in the critical perception of Trollope to the current assessment of the fiction as "strikingly modern, tougher, more ironic and complex" than previously has been granted in the tradition of Trollope scholarship.²

Indeed, Henry James' designation of Trollope's art as a mere appreciation of the usual is responsible for much of the critical heritage. But as Kincaid points out, James' assessment of Trollope is not so much criticism as myth-making.³ The myth remains a powerful symbol, however, so that the critical tradition started by James continues to influence contemporary readings of Trollope's fiction. As Raymond Williams discusses Trollope's pastoral idyll, for instance, he considers Trollope's depiction of society as both "ludicrous" and "perfect": "there is no moral problem of any consequence to disturb the smooth and recommending

construction [of society]."⁴

The power of the tradition places critics who admire Trollope in the awkward position of apologizing for his art. Perhaps the most striking example of admiring apologia comes from Trollope's foremost biographer, Michael Sadlier. Sadlier's biography differs greatly from James' epitaph in tone and intention. Ironically, though, the critical language is notably similar. Sadlier claims that Trollope never wrote a novel "of sudden incident or of striking misadventure."⁵ James likewise asserts that Trollope's novels "deal very little in the surprising, the exceptional, the complicated."⁶ Nevertheless, Sadlier believes that these novels without incident sustain "almost breathless interest"; James considers them "dull, impersonal rumble[s] of the mill-wheel."⁷

The Trollope admirer, therefore, is in the uncomfortable position of admitting a breathless interest in the ordinary and dull. Yet many critics, including James, note Trollope's realism, particularly his realistic portrayal of character, as one of his great strengths as a novelist. James concludes that Trollope's ability to convey the reality in his fictional world proves that "Trollope did not write for posterity; he wrote for the day, the moment."⁸ James' subterfuge disguises the role fiction plays to

illuminate, for the future, the values of a society in a particular day or moment in time. As Robert Polhemus currently argues, the lasting impact of Trollope's art is centered in his fine-tuned creations of society:

Look hard at reality, his fiction seems to say, and you find that the lives of so-called "ordinary" people are in fact extraordinarily interesting and important. The particular quality which makes Trollope a major writer is his outstanding ability to make us aware both of the special predicament of individual Victorians and of the universal human condition....⁹

Polhemus, of course, is right. "Real life" is, usually, interesting to most of us who live it. One of Trollope's strengths as a novelist is his ability to extend the fictional reality to reflect general social as well as individual concerns. As J. Hillis Miller observes, realism in Victorian fiction functions as a "mirror image" that does not reflect reality so much as it images "the imaginary quality of reality."¹⁰ In this respect, Trollope is characteristically Victorian. Victorian novelists generally worked to redefine the nature of fiction. In Victorian fiction, ordinary human lives become as compelling as the heroic or the romantic, perhaps even more so because they seem more

"real."

Trollope continually rejects the heroic and questions romance throughout his fiction. Rather, he focusses on human foibles to create sympathy for his characters and structure our considerations of human nature.¹¹ In his Autobiography, Trollope categorizes his work simply: "I am realistic."¹² But in Trollope's theory of fiction, realism, sensationalism, tragedy are all subordinate to sympathy: "...stories charm us not simply because they are tragic, but because we feel that men and women with flesh and blood, creatures with whom we can sympathise, are struggling amidst their woes. No novel is anything...unless the reader can sympathise with the characters...."¹³

Trollope's most sympathetic characters are always the least heroic. In fiction, Trollope says, "Truth let there be."¹⁴ Truth in his fiction is most often found through gross error rather than through great heroism. Trollope's narrator periodically reminds us to read fiction as a means to judge reality, which may require us to give up the fictional conventions to reach a deeper level of human understanding. Fiction can act as a means to understand life, but only if we relinquish its conventions and extend to characters the sympathy we should have for our neighbors: "The persons whom you cannot care for in a novel, because they are

so bad, are the very same that you so dearly love in your life, because they are so good.... We cannot have heroes to dine with us. There are none."¹⁵

In one of his many treatises on the novel, Trollope complains, "Perhaps no terms have been so injurious to the profession of the novelist as those two words, hero and heroine."¹⁶ The displacement of the heroic in literature is highly modern. Why, then, is Trollope still so often considered the most conventional of Victorian novelists? Kincaid notes that Trollope's "obvious modernity is combined with a resolute and equally obvious old-fashionedness"; the "mixed form" of his fiction counters but does not subvert traditional values.¹⁷ Trollope uses fictional conventions to question rather than reject.

Unlike James, Trollope does not try to redefine fiction through a theoretical construct of the nature of fiction. Trollope is not a radical, but he is subversive. He works within the conventions of the Victorian novel and Victorian society to present characters who work against both fictional and social conventions. For example, in her recent consideration of Trollope, Deborah Denenholz Morse points out how the author uses the conventional marriage plot to subvert ideals for women's choices. As Morse argues, the novels indicate "Trollope's ambivalent relation toward

the often contradictory ideals for Victorian womanhood."¹⁸ Morse's revisionist approach helps provide a necessary antidote to the traditional view of Trollope's treatment of women characters. Trollope's women are not merely, as one critic claims, "genus girls," "born to be submissive, as women must be in Christian marriages."¹⁹ Morse demonstrates that Trollope's women characters use marriage as a legitimate means to achieve their own social influence, as in the case of Lady Glencora Palliser, or to achieve sexual fulfillment, as in the case of Marie Goesler.

The five Palliser novels discussed by Morse all involve upper-class and aristocratic women who are integral parts of Victorian society. In other novels, Trollope often creates women characters who exist outside the social core. As anti-heroines, they not only subvert ideals for Victorian womanhood but manipulate the patriarchal social structure as well. Trollope may include a conventional Victorian heroine in most of his novels, but the real interest lies, not in her, but in the most unnatural English girls.²⁰ Polhemus believes that Trollope's fiction reflects the shifts and changes in Victorian society, marked by threats to the idyllic community or the comfortable class system.²¹ Trollope's anti-heroines test their accepted places within the community and resist gender-

related class distinctions.

Critics from James to Sadlier to Kincaid note a movement in Trollope's vision and tone, a progression from early bright comic novels to later dark satiric ones. Certainly one could argue for a late "dark Trollope" as persuasively as some argue for a late "dark Dickens." Yet even in the early novels, Trollope creates women who live essentially as social outlaws, although they often remain within the boundaries of society. By making these women the centers of interest in the novels and by insisting on a sympathetic response to their misadventures, Trollope implies that fictional and social conventions are inadequate for remarkable women. His anti-heroines are criminals: Lady Mason is a forger, Lizzie Eustace is a thief. To achieve lives that go beyond social convention, they commit extraordinary acts which challenge the very framework of society. As Trollope develops his portrayal of women, the anti-heroines grow in complexity, both as criminals and as characters.

The plots involving anti-heroines move from definable legal crimes to amorphous moral crimes. The shift marks the development of Trollope's world-view and the place of women in the world. In Orley Farm (1862), Trollope shows how Lady Mason violates society by forging her husband's will, an obvious legal crime.

In The American Senator (1877), he shows how Arabella Trefoil's quest to contract a mercenary marriage becomes a moral crime conditioned for her by a corrupt society. Lady Mason takes extreme measures to secure property; Arabella goes any length to secure a husband. Their crimes are actually motivated by the sanctioned principles of their society--to achieve wealth and position. But because they are women, to act for themselves is to act against the social structure. They become criminals by their attempts to participate actively in the patriarchal values under which they live.

Trollope's lady criminals are much like his fiction. They cannot easily be categorized as villainesses, femmes fatales, or heroines, just as Trollope's art is not simply comic, realistic, or sensationalistic. Trollope manages to place women criminals at the center of various novels and yet avoid sensationalism or censure. If judged by his own formula, Trollope's focus on the women's characters defuses the sensationalistic elements of their stories. By first comparing the conventional notions of heroines in Victorian novels with the rise of the lady criminal in Victorian sensation fiction, we can better appreciate Trollope's portrayal of anti-heroines in novels which deal with women who live as social

outlaws.

What is a conventional Victorian heroine? As Merryn Williams describes her, she is a girl under twenty, without a job, without sexuality, without a mother or strong woman to influence her life positively:

But the later, Victorian heroine is too often a shrunken human being who takes no part in events and exists only to uplift and inspire...The mid-Victorian heroine is a very passive creature...with the feeling that she could and should love only one man.²²

Trollope usually includes a conventional heroine in most of his novels, but she is most often the heroine of the subplot, not the major interest of the main story. In contrast to the heroine's fidelity and purity, Trollope's anti-heroines not only love more than one man, but they frequently marry one man and love another. Or, even more often, the anti-heroines marry without love at all. The mercenary marriage is a recurring issue in Trollope's novels. Although generally condemning marriages based solely on financial considerations, Trollope suggests that economic aspects are part of women's primary concerns when deciding to marry. Unlike the image of the Angel of the House who selflessly inspires love in those

around her, Trollope's women are motivated by the self-interested but very real need to find maintenance.

As Patricia Stubbs notes, "the seductive concept of romantic love...became a key part of Victorian mythology."²³ Although Patricia Branca's social history of women's role in the home dispels many of the myths about Victorian middle-class women, the fictions about women created by male writers influenced and continue to influence the popular image of genteel Victorian womanhood.²⁴ The Victorian myth of romantic love granted a woman the power of weakness. She proved herself a worthy object of love by admitting inferiority to her husband. Domestic manuals for women, such as Female Improvements, advised the woman reader concerning her duty as a wife: to 'raise herself, by every means, in the esteem of her husband...and thus, far more than by insisting upon her way, or urging her own claims, she will secure a voice in her husband's counsels, and a place in his tenderest consideration.'²⁵

The popular conception of love and marriage helped reinforce the image of the passive heroine in fiction. By contrast, Trollope's portrayal of women revises the Victorian conceptualization of romantic love, particularly as it relates to marriage. Love is important in Trollope's novels; romance is not.

Trollope always rejects the tenets of romantic love: that women die of broken hearts, that marriage is the natural and inevitable extension of love, that women consider the worthy man a prize to cherish, that pure and untouched hearts are prerequisites to love for women.

Trollope's anti-heroines challenge the requirements for romance. They are not young, pure, or inexperienced. Most are widows, sometimes in middle-age. Their widowhood does not suggest the death of sexuality but rather implies sexual experience. The anti-heroines consciously use their sexual powers to achieve their ends. Lady Mason, Julia Brabazon, Lizzie Eustace, Mrs. Hurtle all use their widows' weeds as aids to seduction. Their clothes cover their social ambitions. As they outwardly participate in Victorian mourning rituals, they actually pursue new schemes for new lives with new men. The anti-heroines in effect reject romance, initially in the mercenary marriages they contract, and finally in their pursuit of less-than-heroic but attractive lovers.

Trollope's anti-heroines are all women with pasts. The fallen woman in Victorian fiction, as Nina Auerbach suggests, is allowed to grow only through her sin.²⁶ Trollope apparently follows this tenet but subverts it as well. He uses his anti-heroines' "sins" as the

agents for "repentance" rather than redemption. Although death is the usual end for fallen women in nineteenth century fiction, Trollope reverses this expectation by allowing his anti-heroines to reintegrate into the community, or at least to seek out new territories beyond the boundaries accepted by "good" society. Many fictional Victorian fallen women are peculiarly asexual, possibly because they are motivated by ambition, not passion.²⁷ The real sin, then, is not in exploring sexuality but in seeking power. Tess Durbeyfield can be redeemed by death because she seeks self-immolation rather than self-actualization. Grant Allen's Herminia Barton can become a New Woman heroine only because she reclaims herself through self-sacrifice and death. In pointed contrast, Trollope's anti-heroines actively use their sexual power to escape the normal punishments for their crimes, creating a paradox: the patriarchal system which disbars women from enjoying legal privileges also absolves them from legal responsibility.

Mary Hartman's exploration of Victorian women criminals affirms the implications within Trollope's fiction. Hartman examines the cases of thirteen accused murderesses to conclude that women were often exonerated from heinous crimes simply because the legal system could not comprehend genteel women acting out

their hostility through violence. (Significantly, Hartman finds that lower-class women met with less generosity from the courts and, subsequently, were more often punished for their crimes than were middle- and upper-class women).²⁸ Trollope's lady criminals experience the paradoxical public reception of the women criminals Hartman examines. "The world" may exonerate the lady criminal in the courtroom, but it also thrives on the sensational spectacle of a woman on trial.

In this respect, Trollope diverges from the usual pattern of Victorian sensation fiction. In contrast, sensation writers like Wilkie Collins and Mary Braddon surprise readers with plot twists and apparently innocent female characters eventually revealed to be demons in Pre-Raphaelite clothing. However, the fate of the sensation heroine actually follows conventional endings for the fallen woman--she is eventually punished harshly for her crimes. The fiction titillates the reader but ultimately reaffirms social values and the conventions of mainstream Victorian fiction. Trollope domesticates the sensation form. He keeps no secrets from the reader and never attempts to create mystery. All mystery is created by society itself. The world invents more crimes and misdeeds for the anti-heroines than they actually commit; the world

sensationalizes their stories. Trollope's technique disguises a more radical subversion. He does not censure individual crimes as much as he criticizes the social values and social system which permit them.

As Elaine Showalter points out, Victorian sensation fiction was in fact based on perverted domesticity and portrayed "an unhappy marriage as a cage rather than a spiritual opportunity."²⁹ Heroines of sensation fiction activate plots against the family, particularly the husband, whereas in other novels, violent plots usually work against women.³⁰ As experienced in Victorian sensation fiction, marriage leads to crime and, in a broad sense, becomes a crime, as it leads sensation heroines to commit forgery, bigamy, adultery, even murder. However, the sensation heroine eventually is punished within the fiction by death or insanity, exonerating the institution which compels her to crime.

Sensation novelists superimposed extraordinary events on to ordinary life.³¹ Trollope takes ordinary life and turns it into an extraordinary event. Sensation heroines are punished largely because they resist suffering. Trollope's anti-heroines escape punishment but suffer from the repercussions of their crimes. For example, Lady Mason never truly repents forging her husband's will, but she is sorry that the

THE LADY AS CRIMINAL: ANTHONY TROLLOPE'S
ADAPTATION OF THE VICTORIAN SENSATION NOVEL

By

Nancy Beth Deal

AN ABSTRACT OF
A DISSERTATION

Submitted to
Michigan State University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

Department of English

1988

revelation jeopardizes her son's social position. In other words, the remorse concerns the consequences rather than the crime. Trollope, moreover, encourages such moral ambivalence. By distancing Lady Mason from the original crime, and by expanding on the circumstances which compel her to crime, Trollope denies the reader an easy moral judgment on Lady Mason's character. He focusses attention away from the crime itself to consider its effect on the woman. Winfred Hughes draws an accurate parallel between Victorian sensation fiction and traditional melodrama; both require sensational endings.³² Instead, Trollope chooses prosaic endings for his anti-heroines. Although they are not always assured happy futures, they at least have another chance at life.

Mid-Victorian literature juxtaposes the sensation heroine of crime novels to the unsensational heroine of sentimental literature.³³ As a mid- and late-Victorian novelist, Trollope juxtaposes elements of sensation and sentimental literature through the women characters in his novels. He tries to enliven the sentimental heroine of the sub-plots while he humanizes the sensational anti-heroines of the main story lines. Heroines such as Lucy Morris in The Eustace Diamonds and Florence Burton in The Claverings eschew the "missishness," as they say, of the demure fiancée.

Polhemus's semi-Freudian approach to love issues in Trollope addresses the complex sexuality present in all Trollope's women characters.³⁴ The anti-heroines do more than reject docility. They espouse sexual power-- and use it. That Trollope focusses his interest, and ours, on the anti-heroines suggests that he wishes us to extend our sympathy to unconventional women as he diverges from the accepted conventions of Victorian fiction.

Dispossessing the Patriarchy:
Lady Mason, Theft, and Orley Farm

Orley Farm (1862) starts in the thick of a "case." Trollope identifies the story as an unresolved legal question and outlines the problem for the reader, replete with suspects, victims, and lawyers. Twenty years before this case, Orley Farm was the subject of a celebrated legal dispute between Sir Joseph Mason's eldest son George and Sir Joseph's young widow Lady Mason. Sir Joseph had been understood to intend to leave all property to George Mason, with adequate provision for his second wife and infant son Lucius. However, at Sir Joseph's death, a surprise codicil is discovered attached to the will, leaving Orley Farm to the youngest son. George Mason at that time disputes the will, accusing Lady Mason of forgery. The family lawyer dies before the the first trial begins, so the discrepancy in testimony from unreliable witnesses goes unchallenged. Lady Mason wins the case and retains control of Orley Farm until Lucius reaches his majority.

Orley Farm examines the effects of the original case. Lucius Mason, now twenty-one, is master of Orley Farm. One of his first acts as landlord is to remove a

land lease from the hands of Samuel Dockwrath, an unscrupulous and avaricious attorney. Dockwrath retaliates by looking into the questionable aspects of the first Orley Farm trial. Trollope introduces the reader to Lady Mason within the context of an undiscovered crime, both a suspect and a victim in the original trial. Her entrance identifies her as the figure of interest in the story, but also denies her a heroine's role:

I trust that it is already perceived by all persistent novel readers that very much of the interest of this tale will be centred in the person of Lady Mason. Such educated persons, however, will probably be aware that she is not intended to be the heroine. The heroine, so called, must by a certain fixed law be young and marriageable...with as much of the heroic about her as may be convenient; but for the present let it be understood that the person and character of Lady Mason is as important to us as can be those of any young lady, let her be ever so gracious or ever so beautiful.¹

Trollope eventually provides a conventional heroine but only after he has established Lady Mason as the central focus of the novel. By the time the young and marriageable Madeline Staveley enters the story, Lady

Mason has secured the devotion of a famous London barrister, has elicited a proposal from a venerable country squire, and has taken control of the story.

Lady Mason possesses none of the qualities of the conventional heroine. Trollope divests her of heroine-like qualities to develop her characterization based on the force of personality rather than on appearance or manners:

She was now forty-seven years of age, and had a son who had reached man's estate; and yet perhaps she had more of woman's beauty at this present time than when she stood at the altar with Sir Joseph Mason. The quietness and repose of her manner suited her years and her position; age had given fulness to her tall form; and the habitual sadness of her countenance was in fair accordance with her condition and character. And yet she was not really sad,--at least so said those who knew her. The melancholy was in her face rather than in her character, which was full of energy,--if energy may be quiet as well as assured and constant (I, p. 15).

Lady Mason is middle-aged rather than young, energetic rather than passive, mysterious rather than ingenuous. Like the anti-heroines of Victorian sensation fiction, Lady Mason appears the perfect lady,

although she is not the perfect heroine.

The tensions in Lady Mason's character help suggest Trollope's subversion of Victorian fictional conventions. In her essay on Orley Farm, Laura Hapke argues that Trollope uses Victorian notions of "proper feminine behavior" as the basis for Lady Mason's success as a criminal.² At the age of twenty, Lady Mason forges the codicil to Sir Joseph's will, securing the estate for her own son and preventing the eldest son's inheritance. Hapke sees Lady Mason's act, and even her subsequent acquittals in two trials, as triumphs for the patriarchy because "crime in a woman is a brief irrationality caused by the pressure of extraordinary circumstances, not by anything in her character more dangerous than simple frailty."³ Trollope certainly points out the extenuating circumstances surrounding Lady Mason's crime, but he concomitantly emphasizes her twenty years of stoic silence in disguising the crime as well as her remarkable resolve in perpetrating the forgery in the first place.

As a woman, Lady Mason has no acknowledged power within the Victorian legal system. Without sanctioned power, she nevertheless manages to commit a crime against the patriarchy, a crime which interferes with primogenitor and dispossesses an eldest son. Further,

Lady Mason maintains her position as a single woman for twenty years, a calculated pose of long-standing. She enjoys the position of mistress of Orley Farm until Lucius is an adult. Lady Mason's success as a criminal is not the result of feminine delicacy but of remarkable resolve: "Lady Mason had earned the respect of all those around her by the way in which she bore herself in the painful days of the trial, and also in those of her success,--especially also by the manner in which she gave her evidence" (I, p. 13).

Trollope's careful emphasis of Lady Mason's demeanor at her trial both magnifies and solves the mystery. Trollope leads the reader to suspect complex, if not criminal, peculiarities to Lady Mason's character. She bears her trouble with courage and her success with calm, as a perfect lady should. At the same time, she gives her evidence in an unusually clever manner, unusual enough to warrant remark from her neighbors and the narrator. Although her well-bred neighbor, Sir Peregrine Orme, learns to excuse her "want of gentle blood and early breeding," the other townsfolk suspect her social reticence without specific cause: "It may therefore be asserted that Lady Mason's widowed life was successful. That it was prudent and well conducted no one could doubt. Her neighbours did say of her that she would not drink tea with Mrs.

Arkwright of Mount Pleasant villa...but such little scandal as this was a matter of course" (p. 14).

Like the authors of sensation fiction, Trollope draws "attention to the artifice of the facade" of the 'inverted qualities which distinguish the normal woman, namely reserve, docility, and sexual apathy.'⁴ Lady Mason appears reserved and docile, but the very fact that she can effectively defend herself from criminal charges leads us to suspect that something in her history is amiss. Trollope underscores the mystery of Lady Mason's character through the mystery of the legal question. Although Trollope denies his interest in plots, he uses the storyline of Orley Farm to develop his characterization of Lady Mason. Comparing his own work to that of Wilkie Collins, Trollope complains that overt plotting distracts from the interest in character and theme: "One is constrained by mysteries and hemmed in by difficulties, knowing, however, that the mysteries will be made clear, and the difficulties overcome at the end of the third volume."⁵

In Orley Farm, Trollope sustains interest through Lady Mason rather than through a suspenseful mystery plot or the promise of a surprise ending which the narrator suspects will surprise no one:

I venture to think, I may almost say to hope, that Lady Mason's confession at the end of the last

chapter will not have taken anybody by surprise. If such surprise be felt I must have told my tale badly. I do not like such revulsions of feeling with regard to my characters as surprises of the nature must generate (II, p. 33).

The narrator calls attention to Lady Mason's guilt and in fact chides readers who might not accept her criminality as important to her character and to the story. Trollope does not absolve Lady Mason but rather enumerates her vagaries to reinforce her criminality: "...she was a forger, and a perjurer, and a thief;--a thief who for long years had lived on the proceeds of her dexterous theft" (II, p. 123). Trollope nevertheless avoids turning Lady Mason into one of the "bizarre and inartistic inventions" of the sensation novelists; unlike Lady Audley, Lady Mason is not perfidious.⁶ Just as she wins both her trials, Lady Mason manages to win and retain the regard of respectable people. The narrator provokingly asks, "What was there about the woman that had made all of those fond of her that came near her?" (I, p. 204).

One obvious quality is her sense of herself as a woman. Lady Mason's femininity and sexuality attracts both women and men. Lady Mason must rely on men to manage her courtroom battles and elicit public support from women for her cause. She manipulates the male-

constructed legal system by asserting her most powerful influence on men, what Trollope coyly calls her "female charms":

Lady Mason was rich with female charms, and she used them partly with the innocence of the dove, but partly also with the wisdom of a serpent. But in such use as she did make of these only weapons which Providence had given her I do not think that she can be regarded as very culpable (I, p. 272).

The narrator absolves Lady Mason of duplicity for using her best resource. He implies that an active use of sexuality is natural for a woman who possesses it. She dresses simply but stunningly to solicit Mr. Furnival's legal advice: "Had she given way to dowdiness, or suffered herself to be, as it were, washed out, Mr. Furnival, we may say, would not have been there to meet her;--of which fact Lady Mason was perhaps aware" (p. 92). To secure Mr. Furnival's influence, Lady Mason exerts her own, using Mr. Furnival's weakness for pretty women to gain power for her cause.

Lady Mason's femininity is the source of her strength, not her weakness. The force of her femininity both attracts and intimidates men. Victorian ideals of womanhood disallow the complex femininity that Lady Mason uses to advantage. Her male

defenders reflect the Victorian dichotomy. They see Lady Mason either as a victim or a criminal. When they consider her a victim, they become her champions. When they realize her guilt, they become emasculated. Lady Mason's deceit not only calls into question chivalric concepts of womanhood but also undermines the accepted superiority of male judgment. Sir Peregrine Orme is particularly devastated by her duplicity, but even Mr. Furnival cannot accept the complexity in Lady Mason's nature which allows her to be a lady and criminal at the same time. Hardly a scrupulous lawyer, Mr. Furnival never directly acknowledges Lady Mason's guilt, even to himself, because he doubts his ability to defend her in court if he makes such an admission: "...he had almost brought himself again to believe Lady Mason to be that victim of persecution as which he did not hesitate to represent her to the jury" (II, p. 2552). Mr. Furnival reconstructs his own knowledge of the truth rather than admit that Lady Mason has herself victimized the court and his own credulity.

Sir Peregrine, however, is most affected by his awareness of Lady Mason's guilt. He proposes to Lady Mason to protect her from the supposed slander of George Mason's and Dockwrath's vindictive allegations. As an old man intending to marry a much younger woman, Sir Peregrine's proposal reflects the conditions which

precipitated Lady Mason's first marriage. Sir Joseph Mason's marriage provides an escape for his young wife from her family's commercial failure. The marriage represents a financial bargain. Sir Peregrine's engagement is meant to rescue Lady Mason from ignominy and thus represents a chivalric act. Margaret King perceptively notes the tension between chivalry and commercialism in Orley Farm.⁷ Both chivalry and commercialism are male constructs to control women's social and economic place. Because chivalry is based on a false concept of womanhood, Sir Peregrine's intended rescue ultimately fails. Like Mr. Furnival, Sir Peregrine believes he can "save" Lady Mason when he believes her a victim.

Curiously, though, Sir Peregrine's love for Lady Mason grows more desperately passionate after she privately confesses her guilt to him. When he believes in her innocence, he believes he only wishes to shield her reputation. When he knows of her guilt, he admits his own desire: 'She was a woman for a man to love to madness.... I love her--with all my heart! It is foolish for an old man so to say; but I did love her; nay, I love her still' (II, p. 288). His exercise of chivalry is an act of control; his expression of love is an admission of weakness. The discovery of Lady Mason's guilt reveals the actual powerlessness of

patriarchal protection. Sir Peregrine's shield can do nothing for Lady Mason that she has not already done for herself. He expects their marriage to win for Lady Mason public approbation; her refusal actually protects Sir Pergrine from the disapprobation which would result from a foolish marriage.

The reversal of roles so diminishes Sir Peregrine that he can no longer function in society. After learning the truth, he cedes control of his estate to his grandson and becomes increasingly dependent on his widowed daughter-in-law to make family decisions. Mrs. Orme is the perfect Victorian angel of the house, the counter image to Lady Mason. Ironically, Mrs. Orme accepts Lady Mason's guilt more complacently than any of the male characters. She is able to provide the most serviceable friendship to Lady Mason because she can accept Lady Mason, not as an image, but as she is. Trollope implies that women and men have discrete notions of honor, loyalty, and truth. Lady Mason's trials prove that men can pervert their own abstract concepts of justice for personal motives without admitting a personal interest. Sir Peregrine cannot reconcile the generous honesty of Lady Mason and the charitable forgiveness of Mrs. Orme with male perceptions of female virtues:

It seemed to him that he might touch pitch and not be defiled;--he or any man belonging to him. But he could not reconcile it to himself that the widow of his son should run such risk. In his estimation there was something almost more than human about the purity of the only woman that blessed his hearth. It seemed to him as though she were a sacred thing, to be guarded by a shrine,--to be protected from all contact with the pollutions of the outer world. And now it was proposed to him that she should take a felon to her bosom as a friend! (II, pp. 46-47).

Mrs. Orme is the only character who can touch Lady Mason's pitch and not be defiled. She challenges Sir Peregrine's perceptions of womanhood when she defends Lady Mason after the confession: 'Dear father, is she not as worthy and as fit as she was yesterday? If we saw clearly into each other's bosoms, whom should we think worthy?' (II, p. 47). Mrs. Orme's friendship to Lady Mason is perhaps an example of what Ruth apRoberts deems Trollope's "Situation Ethics."⁸ Certainly we question whether one can abet crime and remain morally pure. Trollope suggests that we must accept and cope with the dirty parts of the world and the human character. Women are not exempt from this either.

Mrs. Orme displays a complex understanding of morality which Trollope identifies as "A Woman's Idea of Friendship" (II, chapter VI). Her decision to support Lady Mason is a conscious act which calls into question conventional notions of women's purity. Mrs. Orme's equivocal moral decision does not dethrone her as the angel of her house but rather elevates her as a compassionate woman. She is able to uphold the Victorian image even as she violates its tenets. In contrast, Trollope's heroine of Orley Farm, Madeline Staveley, never achieves the complexity of Mrs. Orme or becomes more than a conventional character. Madeline and her rival, Mary Snow, are instead parodies of female purity.

The dull subplot of Madeline's courtship satirizes male images of the genius girl. Madeline's suitor, Felix Graham, falls in love with Madeline while he is engaged to Mary Snow, a young girl he has adopted to mold as a suitable wife. Trollope mocks the fictional convention that requires a marriage plot in a popular novel as well as the social expectation for marriage itself. Trollope sardonically undermines Madeline's role in the novel. He introduces her late in the first volume with an effusive prayer that she please the popular reader:

... as I intend that Madeline Staveley shall, to

many of my readers, be the most interesting personage in the story, I must pause to say something of her. I must say something of her; and, as with all women, the outward and visible signs of grace and beauty are those which are thought of the most, or at any rate spoken of the oftenest, I will begin with her exterior attributes. And that the muses may assist me in my endeavor, teaching my rough hands to draw with some accuracy the delicate lines of female beauty, I now make to them my humble, my earnest prayer (I, p. 144).

The overly-ornate language and the repetition of "I must say something of her" reveal Trollope's bow to conventional tastes and suggest that he regards Madeline's presence almost as an intrusion into the important storyline. Madeline is described only by her appearance--in fact, her appearance is the only interesting thing about her. Lady Mason's character, on the other hand, is developed in terms of her history. As a pure and marriageable young girl, Madeline has no history.

Madeline's story is intended to please the popular audience. By juxtaposing Madeline's conventional romance plot to Mary Snow's contrived marriage plot, Trollope exposes the limited understanding of marriage

within the patriarchal construct. Felix Graham believes he can mold Mary into a wife and that she will naturally appreciate his effort. By rescuing Mary from an alcoholic father, Felix intends to elevate her position by his chivalric act. Mary's own inclinations prove the artificiality of chivalry. Instead of cultivating devout gratitude to Felix, she falls in love with the neighborhood druggist.

To Mary's working-class suitor, she is "The Angel of Light" (I, p. 257). To Felix Graham, Madeline is "The Gem of Four Families" (II, p. 48). The melodramatic titles further parody the sentimental hero's perception of the heroine. Mary Snow, for instance, is no angel; she conducts a sidewalk flirtation and defies her duenna. Trollope uses the romance subplots to undermine patriarchal tenets and make ironic comment on idealized conceptualizations of women. Felix sheepishly arranges Mary's marriage to her true lover. He assumes a false fatherly role, examining the young man and providing a dowry. In his own marriage to Madeline, he must accede to Judge Staveley's demands to become more successful professionally. The Staveley family actually elevate Felix to a higher social position. Although Felix considers himself more ethical than all the other lawyers, his eagerness to rid himself of Mary

compromises his own idealism: "This idea of a model wife had already become a very expensive idea, and in winding it up to its natural conclusion poor Graham was willing to spend almost every shilling that he could call his own" (II, p. 133).

Felix's chivalry deteriorates into commercialism as he buys off Mary Snow and cedes his personal professional code to buy into the Staveley family. Trollope does not so much condemn Felix's arrogance as deride its pretense: "But then modest-minded young men are fools" (II, p. 200). As he participates in Lady Mason's defense during her second trial, Felix learns that he cannot remain professionally pure and remain loyal to his client at the same time. Through his personal and professional errors, Felix discovers that women are not the simple creatures of popular image. His attempts to defend and protect female purity are just as ineffectual as those of Sir Peregrine Orme.

Indeed, Orley Farm reveals Trollope's understanding of the systemized corruption in his world. Lady Mason's case is only a case in point. The legal system devised to protect the innocent and punish the guilty instead protects the guilty and punishes the innocent. Trollope does not so much address the situational ethics of moral decision-making, but rather presents the difficulties involved in defining morality

at all. Lady Mason violates both legal and social codes by perpetrating a crime against the patriarchy. But who is most criminal? What is the real crime? Sir Peregrine Orme's idealism is ineffectual when applied to a moral issue. Mrs. Orme's merciful act of friendship compromises morality. The Mason men are all a line of bad masters. George Mason has the law on his side, but his harsh application of justice seems more criminal than Lady Mason's original forgery and subsequent perjury.

The lawyers, particularly, reveal the corruption of the system they represent. Dockwrath ferrets out truth, but he is motivated by revenge and lacks all sense of mercy. Moreover, as he pretends to champion the larger cause of right, he violates the very procedures intended to ensure a system of justice. He bribes witnesses and uses legal technicalities for personal gain. Similarly, Mr. Chaffanbrass discredits honest witnesses as his strategy for defending Lady Mason, using legal maneuverings to prevent the discovery of truth. Mr. Chaffanbrass' professional code is based on loyalty to his client. His success as a barrister comes from his ability to champion the cause of criminals without regard to guilt or innocence.

Mr. Furnival's relationship to Lady Mason most

1

2

3

4

5

6

7

8

9

10

11

12

13

14

15

16

17

18

19

20

21

22

23

24

exemplifies the moral dilemma. He knows that Lady Mason is guilty but defends her because he decides her forgery is less criminal than George Mason's "malicious justice" (I, p. 207). The notoriety of Lady Mason's original trial helps make Mr. Furnival a successful barrister. His success, however, diminishes him as a man. As he becomes a celebrated lawyer, he neglects his home life, choosing wealth and professional recognition over his wife's happiness. Lady Mason's second trial acts as a catalyst for the Furnivals' marital problems. Mrs. Furnival suspects her husband of infidelity because of his devotion to Lady Mason's cause. Although Mr. Furnival is not unfaithful in act, he develops a flirtatious relationship with Lady Mason which he disguises as both professionalism and chivalry: "It would be sweet to feel that she was in his hands, and that he would treat her with mercy and kindness" (I, p. 198).

Mr. Furnival's interest in Lady Mason's case operates as covert sexual control. He dispenses advice and mercy while he "stray[s] after strange goddesses in these his blue-nose days" (I, p. 91). Trollope exposes the dual hypocrisy behind Mr. Furnival's chivalric defense of Lady Mason. First, as a lawyer, Mr. Furnival's defense is necessarily a business arrangement. Second, he intentionally creates

an image of Lady Mason as a wronged woman to facilitate a successful defense: "It would be a great thing if he could spread abroad a conviction that she was an injured woman.... The jurymen of Alston would be mortal men; and it might be possible that they should be imbued with a favourable bias on the subject before they assembled in their box for its consideration" (I, p. 198).

Lady Mason is indeed a strange goddess, and Mr. Furnival is well-aware of the mortality of men when considering the effect of her charms. Mr. Furnival's championship of Lady Mason centers on popular images of womanhood. Publicly and privately, he invents an image of her as a frail and helpless woman. Mr. Chaffanbrass agrees to help with Lady Mason's defense with a strikingly different perception of his client: "I remember thinking that Lady Mason was a very clever woman.... A pretty woman like that should have everything smooth; shouldn't she? Well, we'll do the best we can. You'll see that I'm properly instructed" (I, p. 269). Mr. Chaffanbrass is Trollope's Mr. Jagers, intensified. He is a dirty lawyer who never bothers to wash his hands. Yet he is essentially more honest than Mr. Furnival since he acknowledges that his task is to manipulate a fraudulent justice.

Lady Mason's lawyers realize the importance of

manipulating public opinion as an integral part of her defense. Lady Mason's notoriety as a lady criminal actually helps her gain public support:

As the trial progressed the interest in it increased, and as people began to believe that Lady Mason had in truth forged a will, so did they the more regard her in the light of a heroine. Had she murdered her husband after forging his will, men would have paid half a crown apiece to have touched her garments, or a guinea for the privilege of shaking hands with her (II, p. 240).

The narrator reevaluates what constitutes a real heroine in the public mind. Forgery and murder are not the provinces only of sensation fiction. Hartman's reconstruction of the trials of respectable middle-class women accused of capital crimes confirms Trollope's fictional assertion. Women's trials elicited great public interest--the more lurid the better.⁹

In some ways, Trollope follows the practice of sensation writers with his "assault on the heroine"; like the sensation heroine, Lady Mason represents "a moral ambivalence rather than a moral certainty."¹⁰ Still, Trollope denies Lady Mason's function as a fictional heroine just as he denies his similarity to sensation writers. Trollope uses Lady Mason's case to

comment on society's values, particularly represented by popular attitudes toward women's function in society. Lady Mason is much more engrossing than a conventional heroine and much less evil than a sensation heroine. Her beauty and apparent docility seem to support the Victorian cultural myth of the ornamental middle-class woman. Her crime demolishes the basis of the myth, that women passively accept the constraints of the system under which they live.

Lady Mason not only threatens but deposes the patriarchal legal system. She is more clever than all the lawyers and other "commercial gentlemen." She disregards the abstract bases of the male-dominated system, but exercises her own set of scruples regarding personal matters. She refuses Sir Peregrine's offer rather than jeopardize his reputation; much of her concern over the second trial involves the effect it will have on her son. She resists both confession and repentance. Lady Mason's sense of shame concerns public opinion more than private remorse:

The world, her world, that world for which she had cared, in which she had lived, had treated her with honour and respect, and had looked upon her as an ill-used innocent woman. But now all that would be over. Every one must know what she was.

And then, as she lay there, that thought came to her. Must every one know it? Was there no longer any hope for her? (II, p. 34).

Even in the aftermath of her confession to Sir Peregrine, Lady Mason considers new schemes to preserve the conditions of her life in society. She realizes that her outward image will be compromised by the revelation of guilt; thus, she decides to proceed with the second trial, doubling her act of perjury. Nineteenth century fiction assumes that self-sacrifice is the natural bent of femininity. Trollope counters the convention with Lady Mason's successful effort to elude public scorn and legal punishment. He suspects that, even for women, self-protection is a more natural human motivation than self-sacrifice.

Lady Mason wins her trial but agrees to cede Orley Farm to George Mason in a private arrangement. The private act refutes the public verdict. The legal system actually rewards fraud and perpetuates injustice by allowing Lady Mason the right to retain the estate and continue to live a lie. When she activates justice by returning the property, she is exiled from her community. She and Lucius begin new lives in Germany. Again Trollope reverses the Victorian fictional convention which requires fallen women to die as payment for their crimes against society. Lady

Mason is given the opportunity for a new life in a new sphere:

Of her future life I will not venture to say anything. But no lesson is truer than that which teaches us to believe that God does temper the wind to the shorn lamb.... For Lady Mason, let us hope that the day will come in which she also may trick her beams in some modest, unassuming way, and that for her the morning may even yet be sweet with a glad warmth (II, p. 312).

The trick of Orley Farm's ending is not just the unlikely conventional hope for an unusual protagonist. Trollope tricks the reader out of a conventional love story and a conventional heroine as well as a conventional ending. He encourages the reader to expect additional vagaries from Lady Mason. Nothing we know about her indicates that she will ever assume modest ambitions for her life, whatever her demeanor.

What we know about Lady Mason comes mostly from the perception of others. Secrecy is part of her fascination and a key part of her success as a criminal. Trollope asks us to consider how a woman can be both a lady and a criminal. Lady Mason tells Sir Peregrine, 'I am guilty... Guilty of all this with which they charge me' (II, p. 32). Sir Peregrine is astounded by the discrepancy between Lady Mason's outer

and inner life:

Could it be that she had forged that will; that with base, premeditated contrivance she had stolen that property; stolen it and kept it from that day to this;--through all these long years? And then he thought of her pure life, of her womanly, dignified repose, of her devotion to her son,--such devotion indeed!--of her sweet pale face and soft voice.... He thought of it all, and he could not believe that she was guilty (II, p. 34).

Lady Mason is sweet, soft, and womanly, but she is undeniably guilty. Her crime does not prevent her from leading a pure life for twenty years or from manifesting conventionally accepted qualities of femininity. Trollope stresses her innocence and guilt equally, prodding the reader to bestow greater humanity on his character than the conventional images of women permit. Lady Mason manifests the complexities, not simply of woman's nature, but of human nature--for both good and bad.

The final juxtaposition of heroine and anti-heroine is a striking subversion to convention. Trollope ends Orley Farm with a two-line reference to Madeline Staveley's marriage. The narrator makes negligible comment on Madeline's future--"as yet I have not heard of any banishment"--whereas he affirms hope

for Lady Mason's life--"For her, on the whole, the change was for the better" (II, p. 320). Lady Mason's exit from the novel brings the significant story to a close: "And now we will say farewell to her, and as we do so the chief interest of our tale will end" (II, p. 312). Trollope's adieu to Lady Mason echoes our first introduction to her and reinforces her importance as the novel's anti-heroine.

Using many of the forms of Victorian sensation fiction, Trollope reconstructs the elements to provide an equivocal conclusion to Orley Farm. He does not allow a sense of resolution with the restoration of patriarchal possession. He does not assert the supremacy of Madeline's marital happiness over Lady Mason's widowed contentment. Lady Mason dupes a corrupt system and wins the world's admiration for her audacity. Trollope's ambivalent ending is his final comment on the moral equivocity of the world of Orley Farm. Lady Mason's crime against social institutions only reveals a larger social corruption. Even in this early novel, Trollope displays a complex understanding of the nature of women's place in his society as he prefigures the darker social criticism of the later novels. Orley Farm gives tepid support to convention and rejuvenation. For Lady Mason, perhaps for all unconventional women, exile may be the only chance for

a better life. With the restoration of Orley Farm to its rightful owner, the patriarchy banishes Lady Mason, but the escape from patriarchal control is a change for the good.

Claiming the Patriarchal Inheritance:
"Lady Ongar's Revenge" in The Claverings

In Orley Farm, Trollope's examination of a corrupt legal system exposes the inadequacies of patriarchal institutions and women's subversive means to combat their oppression. In The Claverings (1866), he dissects the intimate workings of the patriarchy within the family. In this novel, the Clavering family is society. The male members each represent conventional roles for gentlemen by their social positions: Sir Hugh Clavering is a baronet, his brother Archie is a military officer, Harry Clavering is an Oxford scholar, Harry's father is a clergyman after the worldly model of Archdeacon Grantly. Despite their aristocratic heritage, the Clavering men are not noble. Harry's peccadilloes with two women form the substance of the storyline, revealing the emotional and social abuse women receive within the construct of a highly patriarchal family.

The Claverings begins with the end of a romance. Julia Brabazon rejects Harry Clavering to marry the wealthy debauchee, Lord Ongar. Harry subsequently pledges himself to a life of misery and celibacy because of Julia's defection, but he becomes engaged to

Florence Burton within a year. When Lord Ongar dies of delirium tremens a year after Julia's marriage, Harry is torn between the return of his old lover and the commitment to his new sweetheart. Harry's infidelity and final return to Florence forms the simple plot of The Claverings, but Julia's attempt to infiltrate into a closed society to achieve a position of power provides the real interest of the novel.

Julia's marriage to Lord Ongar is motivated by mercenary considerations, always a major issue in Trollope's novels. Julia commits the "crime" of forsaking romance for money. She distinguishes between romance, love, and marriage with sardonic detachment, perceiving Harry's attachment as immature ardor based on falsely romantic notions of love: 'It must be manifest to you during these two years that all that was a romance.'¹

The opening scene between Julia and Harry establishes the conflict between romantic love and married life as the basis for the novel. Julia's apparently mistaken and cynical attitude seems to establish her as the heartbreaking femme fatale. However, the imagery of the scene reflects Julia's perception of Harry's love as a fruitless proposition. Trollope fills the garden scene with dark images which suggest that Harry's protestations of love actually

reveal a dearth of real affection: "It was now the end of August, and the parterres, beds, and bits of lawn were dry, disfigured, and almost ugly, from the effects of a long drought...everything was yellow, adust, harsh, and dry" (p. 1).

Trollope juxtaposes the stories of the conventional heroine and the anti-heroine to reveal the decay of the traditional romance/marriage plot. Trollope's discussion of The Claverings focusses attention on Julia's character and history as the interest of the novel. He points out the reversal of expectations for male-female roles as central to the story:

The chief character is that of a young woman who has married manifestly for money and rank.... When she is free, the man whom she had loved and who had loved her, is engaged to another woman. He vacillates and is weak,--in which weakness is the fault of the book, as he plays the part of the hero. But she is strong--strong in her purpose, strong in her desires.²

Trollope's disingenuous assessment of the novel accounts for a popular reading as it explains the subversion of the text. Harry is weak, Julia is strong. Harry becomes engaged to a model Victorian girl, yet Florence is the "other woman." Harry casts

himself into the role of romantic hero with both women. He snobbishly believes he is elevating Florence to a higher position by marrying her, and he sentimentally defends Julia as a wronged woman. Trollope undermines Harry's motivations by questioning the whole romantic concept of heroes and heroines as a mere fictional creation that damages our ability to respond to the complexities of life honestly or naturally: "In spite of the latitude which is allowed to the writer in putting his own interpretation upon these words [hero and heroine], something heroic is still expected; whereas, if he attempt to paint from Nature, how little that is heroic should he describe!" (p. 239).

Harry Clavering particularly manifests romantic illusions about love. More than being genuinely in love with either Florence or Julia, he is in love with an image of himself as the hero of romance. By engaging himself to a girl of a lower social class, he believes he sacrifices better marriage opportunities for love. By becoming Julia's champion during her widowhood, he creates a view of himself as a lost man sacrificing himself for Julia's sake: "What would he care what the world might say?... There had been a tragic seriousness in what had occurred to him...which seemed to cover him with care, and make him feel that his youth was gone from him" (pp. 214-15).

Trollope continually undermines Harry's self-perceptions. The narrator points out that what Harry considers tragedy is merely folly. Harry's lack of heroism is caused by his faulty sense of honor: "In all his love for Florence,--so he now told himself, but so told himself falsely,--he had ever remembered that Julia Brabazon had been his first love, the love whom he had loved with all his heart" (p. 174). Harry privately scorns the Burtons because he is, by rank, a gentleman. The idea of the gentleman is always important in Trollope, but the narrator reminds us that rank alone does not insure good character: "High rank and soft manners may not always belong to a true heart" (p. 217).

Julia's marriage to Lord Ongar proves that high rank cannot insure against a cruel heart. Julia feels she must marry for money because, as a high-ranking but dowerless girl, she has amassed debts to maintain her social position. Lord Ongar agrees to assume her debts during their engagement, but his subsidy becomes her blood money later. Lord Ongar compromises Julia's reputation to prevent her from inheriting after his death, even though she has lived up to her part of their marriage bargain: to be a social ornament to him and to nurse him through the last stages of alcoholism. On his deathbed, Lord Ongar starts divorce proceedings

against Julia, having induced his friend Count Pateroff to try to become Julia's lover. Julia denies any involvement with the Count, but because of the rumors started by her husband, her brother-in-law Hugh Claverling refuses to acknowledge her. Accepting Hugh's condemnation, society bans her as well.

The world decides Julia is guilty of adultery because the head of her family ostracizes her. Trollope complicates the moral indictment. First, he is unsparing in his treatment of Sir Hugh as an abusive patriarch. Second, he leaves open the question of Julia's guilt. Harry believes in her innocence, but Harry is no judge of character. Enchanted by her position, wealth, and beauty, he is conscious of his own chance to achieve position and wealth through a marriage to her. Julia defends herself more on the grounds of her husband's ill-treatment than on the basis of her innocence. She hesitates to snub Count Pateroff because of his intimate knowledge of her married life, and she feels compelled to support the Count's sister, Sophie Gourdeloupe, because of Sophie's mysterious aid during the time of Julia's troubles.

Count Pateroff purports to hold compromising documents about his relationship to Julia. Sophie is able to blackmail Julia because she knows so much about Julia's past:

There are services for which one is ready to give almost any amount of money payment,--if only one can be sure that that money payment will be taken as sufficient recompence for the service in question. Sophie Gourdeloupe had been useful.... She had done things which nobody else could have done, and she had done her work well (p. 393).

Sophie's own past and reputation are murky at best. Her association with Julia reinforces both suspicion and sympathy for the anti-heroine. The gullible Archie Clavering believes that Sophie is a Russian spy. Her long-absent husband was once associated with the St. Petersburg embassy, but we never know in what capacity, nor do we learn what becomes of him. We know that Sophie herself is both a blackmailer and an anonymous letter-writer. Sophie is on the fringes of society, but her own social position is still stronger than Julia's. When Julia tries to break their association, Sophie taunts Julia with her relative freedom: 'I can choose my friends anywhere. The world is open to me to go where I please into society. I am not at a loss' (p. 246).

In marked contrast to Julia's banishment from the family by her brother-in-law, Sophie's is allowed social freedom because of the support of her brother. Sophie works hard to facilitate a marriage between

Julia and the Count. Count Pateroff is a smooth man of the world who assumes the quiet mannerisms of a well-bred Englishman. He is a well-known figure in aristocratic circles despite his suspect lineage. He knows the inner-workings of Harry's club better than Harry himself. Julia is without active male support. She lives in virtual isolation. The financial power Julia gains from Lord Ongar's money is severely tempered by the social ostracism that accompanies it. Lord Ongar's money provides her with the means to buy Harry as a husband but also makes her the target of unfastidious fortune-hunters. Her tarnished reputation is a handicap only if she remains a single woman without male protection. In an ironic parallel to Julia's arrangement with Lord Ongar, Sir Hugh is willing to accept her into the family only if agrees to marry Archie and take over his debts.

Julia's isolation from family life corresponds to the disaffection with middle-class domesticity addressed in Victorian sensation fiction.³ Normally, Trollope's narrator provides information and commentary to correct false impressions or mistaken perceptions of his characters. With Sophie and Julia, he remains unusually reticent about clearing the mysteries that surround their characters. As Elaine Showalter points out, secrecy was both a prime element of sensation

fiction and "was basic in the lives of all respectable [Victorian] women."⁴

Trollope adds several layers to Showalter's premise. Julia and Sophie are not typical, or respectable, middle-class Victorian women. The secrecy enveloping Julia's married life becomes sensationalized because of the nature of the public accusations. As in Orley Farm, society openly discusses the supposedly unspeakable crimes of the anti-heroine.

After Julia's failed attempt to reenter her family, she tries to establish a domestic sphere of her own. Following her return to England, Julia travels to Ongar Park, the estate left to her in Lord Ongar's will. As mistress of Ongar Park, she believes she can find happiness independent of family life: "Everything in and about the place was her own, and she might live there happily, even in the face of the world's frowns, if she could teach herself to find happiness in rural luxuries" (p. 96).

Julia, at Ongar Park, defies the world's frowns, but she cannot feel that the place is really her own. As she tries to assert ownership, she continually reminds herself of the moral cost of possession: "It was all her own. It was the price of what she had done; and the price was even now being paid into her hand,--paid with current coin and of full weight" (p.

98). Julia creeps around the neighborhood veiled and rarely strays far from the house. The Rector's wife refuses to visit her. Even the housekeeper shuns her. Julia's attempt at an independent life only humiliates her further. The "joys of possession" become her burden: "She had the price in her hands, but she felt herself tempted to do as Judas did,--to go out and hang herself" (pp. 101-102).

Yet Julia believes she can redeem her act of "mercenary perfidy" by marrying Harry Clavering and showering her wealth on him. In a sense, she still believes in the possibilities of a mercenary marriage, but with Harry, she would be the buyer rather than the goods. She even speculates on the possibility of Harry assuming the Ongar title. In effect, she attempts to give him a name. Julia's defiance of the patriarchy extends to an effort to establish her own seat of power through her economic advantages.

Unlike most "economically impotent" Victorian women, Julia has powerful financial resources. Even so, she still falls "outside the paternalistic family system."⁵ Although she is a suspected adulteress, her real crime is her refusal to accept Hugh's terms for reintegrating into the family. Trollope is unsparing in his treatment of Hugh Clavering. Hugh is an abusive husband. Julia's sister Hermione is isolated at

Clavering Park, shunned and despised as a wife. Hugh refuses Hermione consolation after their child dies, effecting a virtual separation when Hermione no longer fulfills her role as the mother of the heir. Hugh does not allow Hermione to visit Julia or to leave Clavering Park, confining her to an empty house, devoid of occupation and bereft of any human affection.

Hugh sees marriage in purely utilitarian terms. He sees no reason to stay with Hermione once she has served her limited purpose, and love is not a factor in any of his considerations about marriage:

What had his wife done for him, that he should put himself out of his way to do much for her? She had brought him no money. She had added nothing either by her wit, beauty, or rank to his position in the world. She had given him no heir. What had he received from her that he should endure her commonplace conversation, and washed-out, dowdy prettinesses? (p. 30).

Hugh is, admittedly, a monster patriarchal figure, but his view of his marriage resembles Harry's considerations toward his engagement to Florence Burton--that is, what worldly advantage does she offer? Hugh's attitudes pervade the entire Clavering clan. Most significantly, Hugh's assessment of Hermione reflects commonplace Victorian assumptions that confine

women to "social, decorative and childbearing role[s]."⁶

Florence is the heroine of The Claverings, but she is not much of a character; she is mostly a device in the love triangle. She is the wronged woman, but she is wronged by Harry, not Julia. Trollope implies that the woman is the sufferer in love and marriage, particularly because she has little power or recourse beyond endurance. Julia's attempts to win back Harry fail despite her many resources. Florence herself does nothing to hold Harry to their engagement. According to the domestic manuals, Florence should gain power over Harry from her passivity and weakness. Instead, Florence's sister-in-law and Harry's mother have to shame him into keeping his promise to her.

Cecilia Burton and Mrs. Clavering are influential matriarchs, but their main roles are to cover the errors of the family men. Mr. Clavering is an idle, hedonistic clergyman who sets an arrogant, worldly example before Harry. Rather than insist on Harry honoring his commitment to Florence, Mr. Clavering speculates on the advantages Lady Ongar's wealth could give the family: "...a rich marriage would be an easy way out of all the difficulties" (p. 344). Mr. Clavering's moral indignation at Julia's suspected adultery diminishes at the prospect of gaining the

wealth secured by her marriage. In other words, a mercenary marriage which benefits Harry is acceptable since Julia's money will again be placed within patriarchal constructs.

Mrs. Clavering takes over all the private duties of the parish and acts as the conscience of the family. The Rector accepts her energies on his behalf, preferring her contempt over his own exertions:

And his wife had given him up. She had given him up, not with disdainful rejection, nor with contempt in her eye, or censure in her voice, not with diminution of love or of outward respect. She had given him up as a man abandons his attempts to make his favourite dog take the water. He would fain that the dog he loves should dash into the stream as other dogs will do. It is, to his thinking, a noble instinct in a dog. But his dog dreads the water. As, however, he has learned to love the beast, he puts up with this mischance, and never dreams of banishing poor Ponto from his hearth because of this failure. And so it was with Mrs. Clavering and her husband at the rectory. He understood it all. He knew that he was so far rejected; and he acknowledged to himself the necessity for such rejection (pp. 12-13).

Hermione remarks to Mrs. Clavering about the love that pervades the family at the rectory, but Trollope's description of Mrs. Clavering's marriage distinguishes between love and romance. Mrs. Clavering learns to love her husband and to do the hard work in the marriage without romance.

Cecilia Burton, too, "in all affairs of tact, of social intercourse, and of conduct between man and man, or man and woman...actually fought the battles" (p. 266). Cecilia acts as the mediator between the Clavering and Burton interests when Harry reneges on the engagement. She receives Harry's confession and plans her own attack to secure Florence's happiness. Without consulting her husband, Cecilia boldly visits Julia to plead Florence's case.

The marriages within Julia's experience confirm her cynicism about romantic love. She perceptively notes the absence of romance in the Clavering marriages. Hugh's abuse and Mr. Clavering's neglect provide the models for husbands. Harry's vacillations and infidelity provide the model for lovers, lapses Harry himself considers "so common with men" (p. 262). Julia's marriage is a grotesque extension of these relationships. Lord Ongar is abusive even though she fulfills her married roles as nurse and social ornament. Accusations of infidelity also color her

married relationship. Like Harry, Julia fails to perceive that love often exists without romance.

Trollope's narrator articulates a revised conception of committed love that conflicts with notions of romantic love: "A man, though he may love many, should be devoted only to one.... There is much of this which is quite independent of love,--much of it that may be done without love. This is devotion..." (pp. 239-40). Harry's romantic disposition actually works against love. Because Florence is not invested with princess-like endowments, she does not seem as worthy of his love as Julia:

Poor Florence Burton was short of stature, was brown, meagre, and poor-looking. So said Harry Clavering to himself. Her small hand, though soft, lacked that wondrous charm of touch which Julia's possessed. Her face was short, and her forehead, though it was broad and open, had none of that feminine command which Julia's look conveyed (p. 19).

On the other hand, Harry creates a romantic image of Julia as the femme fatale: "She had robbed him of his high character, of his unclouded brow, of the self-pride which had so often told him that he was living a life without reproach among men. She had brought him to a state in which misery must be his bedfellow..."

(p. 216). Harry excuses his own treatment of women by blaming what he perceives as the women's failings.

Trollope's resolution of the Julia-Florence rivalry is involved and peculiar. He invokes many conventional devices as possible solutions, but all distort the traditional comic marriage plot. Cecilia Burton appeals to Julia's sense of feminine solidarity to cede her hold on Harry to Florence's claim. In the spirit of Trollope's anti-heroines, Julia remains unrepentent and self-interested. She rejects self-sacrifice in the spirit of self-assertion: 'You cannot expect that I should love another woman better than myself' (p. 318).

Florence's response to betrayal is strikingly different and appropriately conventional. With the proper spirit of a heroine, Florence chooses self-denial rather than insist on fair treatment. She readily excuses Harry for his own interests in a remarkable act of self-deprecation:

For herself,--had she not known that she had only come second? As she thought of him with his noble bride and that bride's great fortune, and of her own insignificance, her low birth, her doubtful prettiness,--prettiness that had ever been doubtful to herself, of her few advantages, she told herself that she had no right to stand

upon her claims (p. 269).

Again, the mercenary marriage is sanctioned when contracted for Harry's advantage. Florence condemns Julia's marriage as an act of prostitution, considering her rival "a bold, bad woman who could forget her sex, and sell her beauty and her womanhood for money" (p. 267). Yet she is willing to see Harry's defection as a justifiable act of romance, "the strength of an old love which he could not quell" (p. 269). Florence accepts, indeed supports, the double standard which permits Harry to repudiate romance for money but which condemns Julia to criminal status. As a prince of romance, Florence would insist, Harry deserves Julia's wealth to complete the romantic image.

When Mrs. Clavering coerces Harry into keeping his promise to Florence, Trollope seems to confirm the supremacy of the heroine. Ironically, though, Florence is the real loser. The Rectory family never considers Florence suitable material for the Clavering line. Harry comes into succession of the baronetcy only through warped means. Hugh and Archie both drown in a boating accident; thus, Harry achieves his title only through premature and violent death. Harry's response to Florence's role as Lady Clavering echoes Hugh's attitude toward Hermione, "that her destiny might probably call upon her to be the mother of a future

baronet" (p. 377).

Following the conventions of the comic marriage plot, Florence is elevated to the position of a titled lady, but her happiness does not seem assured. Even after Harry "returns to the fold" (p.343), his mother and sisters continue to doubt his constancy. Mrs. Clavering urges Florence to an immediate marriage to "reward" Harry's return: "'Believe me it will be best that it should not be delayed.'" Whether or no Mrs. Clavering had present in her imagination the possibility of any further danger that might result from Lady Ongar, I will not say..." (p. 398).

Florence's security within the Clavering patriarchy remains precarious. Harry's assumption of the title is juxtaposed to the end of Hugh's reign as patriarch. The narrator provides a harsh eulogy for Hugh and Archie that offers only tempered hope for renewal within the family: "Was it not well that two such men should be consigned to the fishes, and that the world,--especially the Clavering world...should be well quit of them?" (p. 377). The narrator openly accuses the brothers of unbridled greed: "Both of the brothers had lived on the unexpressed theory of consuming, for the benefit of their own backs and their own bellies, the greatest possible amount of those good things which fortune might put in their way" (p. 377).

After their deaths, the narrator describes Harry and his father in similar terms, as they assess the property left to them as a result of the family tragedy: "...the rector and Harry took themselves off, somewhere about the grounds of the great house,-- counting up their treasures of proprietorship..." (p. 406). In contrast to Hugh, Harry is weak rather than harsh, but the essential family values remain constant and promise continuance under Harry's control.

As the heroine, Florence will be subject to the greed and snobbishness that marked Hermione's marriage to the Clavering baronet. As the anti-heroine, Julia escapes control through exile. After Hugh's death and Harry's return to Florence, Julia decides to establish her own residence, with her sister, in Europe. Julia maintains her independence and sets the conditions for her life while she reconciles with the patriarchal system on her own terms. Julia cedes her claim to Ongar Park, returning the estate to Lord Ongar's family. Like Lady Mason, she redeems herself with the system by restoring its most valued component, property. Julia's "repentance" results from the personal misery caused by her mercenary marriage. Having previously resisted threats from Lord Ongar's family to yield the property, she structures her atonement to suit herself. Curiously, the restoration

only produces incredulity. Both the Ongar and Clavering clans believe she is mad when she acts on her own accord.

Julia does not act out of a sense of abstract justice. She acts out of her own sense of integrity for her own contentment: 'I will not have his money.... It is a curse to me, and has been from the first' (p. 385). Julia's lawyer and the Clavering men try to dissuade her from surrendering wealth, but she rejects the authority of the male view of her situation: 'Who is there that can advise me? Of course the lawyer tells me that I ought to keep it all. It is his business to give such advice as that. But what does he know of how I feel? How can he understand me?' (p. 384).

Julia's dilemma about property raises perplexing questions about women's economic and social place in the world of The Claverings. Julia must choose social condemnation or economic powerlessness. By retaining wealth, she retains power yet concomitantly loses her social position through accusations of immoral conduct. By yielding wealth, she loses power and is then considered mad--but good--in the bargain. In Lady Audley's Secret, Mary Bradden excuses Lady Audley's attack on the patriarchy by assigning her to an insane asylum, suggesting that insanity is the reason behind a

woman's anger and exercise of power. Trollope structures our sympathy for Julia by treating the world's easy explanation as the real insanity. Julia never acts so much for herself as when she cedes the property. In essence, she trades both social place and economic power for independence. She no longer fights the system but withdraws from it.

Julia finally condemns herself for marrying without love, but she is never sorry for her attempt to achieve love with Harry Clavering. She never considers herself the other woman or apologizes for her active expression of sexuality: "What cared she now for the common ways of women and the usual coynesses of feminine coquetry?" (p. 145). Julia continues to use her advantages even after she loses Harry to Florence. Julia forces a confrontation with Harry and corners Florence to offer cautionary advice about love and marriage.

Trollope significantly titles the confrontation scene, "Lady Ongar's Revenge" (pp. 361-69). Unlike Florence, Julia does not excuse Harry's lack of honor by searching for a personal lack in herself: "...there could be no reason why Harry Clavering should not be made to know all that he had lost" (p. 364). Julia carefully controls their conversation to make Harry as uncomfortable as possible and prevent him from

dominating the meeting: "She had especially determined to be at ease during this meeting, and was conscious that any falling off in that respect on her part would put into his hands the power which she was desirous of exercising" (p. 366).

Julia understands that love issues can remain her one sphere of domination, even though she loses her lover:

The excitement of having a passion which she might indulge was over with her,--at any rate for the present. She had played her game and had lost woefully; but before she retired altogether from the gaming-table she could not keep herself from longing for a last throw of the dice (p. 365).

Unfortunately, Julia's power still comes from a condition of loss. Through the contrasting responses of Julia and Florence to rejection, Trollope seems to affirm the conventional wisdom which recommends feminine delicacy in love. However, we are left to wonder which woman is the real winner. Florence gets her man, but the narrator reminds us that Harry is a sheep (p. 351). The narrator also adds one sly qualification to Julia's single position; her passion is only conditionally over for the present. Harry may nurse romantic wounds of unrequited love at Julia's marriage, but the narrator leaves us to suppose that

Julia will recover from Harry's marriage to another woman.

Julia also assumes the ironic role of Lady Bountiful toward Florence. With marvelous audacity, Julia guides Florence through Clavering Park, Florence's own future home. Particularly, Julia leads Florence through the garden, the site of Julia's original rupture with Harry: 'Not that there is much to show you,' said Lady Ongar; 'indeed nothing; but the place must be of more interest to you than to any one else.... It's a gloomy place enough; is it not?' (p. 403). Julia's final speech to Florence expresses both hope and doubt for the woman's happiness in the patriarchal seat. Julia's comments suggest that Florence, as a conventional woman, may be able to find satisfaction under a patriarchal dominion even as they express regret for her own ability, as an unconventional woman, to achieve the promises of love:

'A spirit of prophecy comes on one sometimes, I suppose.... I have shown you all the wonders of the garden, and told you all the wonders connected with it of which I know aught. No doubt there would be other wonders, more wonderful, if one could ransack the private history of all the Claverings for the last hundred years. I hope, Miss Burton, that any marvels which may attend

your career here may be happy marvels' (p. 405). Julia's wish for Florence's happiness seems an ominous warning about her place in the Clavering family and Harry's affection. The withered garden is a bleak emblem of Julia's private history with the Claverings and, possibly, an omen of Florence's future.

By using one family to represent society, Trollope offers a microcosmic criticism of patriarchal oppression in The Claverings. As the anti-heroine of this novel, Julia Brabazon tries both to enter and influence the family construct. Julia possesses both the traditional weapons of male power, money and property, and the traditional weapons of female manipulation, beauty and charm. For attempting to usurp the male sphere of economic control, she is accused of contracting a mercenary marriage, essentially an act of prostitution. For attempting to fulfill feminine roles, she is accused of adultery. Trollope fails to assure us that the accusations are false, yet he structures the interest of the novel to manipulate our sympathy toward Julia's quest for self-assertion under conditions which disallow a woman's full realization of self.

The Claverings also works as a microcosm for Trollope's panoramic criticism of society in The Way We Live Now. In that novel, Trollope extends the plight

of two women involved with one family to examine women's place in a larger social arena. The Claverings may fairly be seen as a precursor to the later, sprawling novel, a contained exposition of the complex Victorian social attitudes. Nearly every female character in The Way We Live Now is both a criminal and a victim. Within this society, women are punished both in their attempts to achieve or reject the social values assigned to them. As Julia Brabazon says of herself, 'I am a chameleon, and take the colour of those with whom I live' (p. 403).

Expanding the Form: "Wild-Cat"

Anti-Heroines in The Way We Live Now

The Way We Live Now (1872) is perhaps Trollope's most ambitious novel. A sprawling satire of late Victorian society, The Way We Live Now exposes vice in nearly every social institution. Trollope dissects the financial, political, and literary worlds to reveal social corruption everywhere. He particularly uses the mercenary marriage as a device to expose the greed and self-interest which penetrate even the most intimate human relationship, creating a world without positive values and bereft of love.

The mercenary marriage is itself an institution in the high society of the novel. In The Way We Live Now, marriage for financial gain alone is the objective of both male and female characters. Not surprisingly, the women are mostly adversely affected by its consequences. Domestic life barely exists in this society, as marriage becomes a public exchange of goods to display before the larger world. The decentralized plot allows Trollope to employ the "new kind of family pattern" characteristic of Victorian sensation fiction and thereby to uncover corrupt family life in the homes of squires, aristocrats, and laborers alike.¹

Trollope expands his use of the anti-heroine in

The Way We Live Now, creating several subversive women characters to address the issues of love, marriage, and maintenance. He first introduces Lady Carbury, a beautiful middle-aged widow and herself a writer of sensational historical fiction. Lady Carbury's book, Criminal Queens, reveals Lady Carbury's own attitude toward women's conditions as formed out of her experience in society. In a letter to her editor, Mr. Broune, Lady Carbury articulates the operating principle for ambitious women, disclosing her personal creed for success:

'After all how few women there are who can raise themselves above the quagmire of what we call love, and make themselves anything but playthings for men. Of almost all these royal and luxurious sinners it was the chief sin that in some phase of their lives they consented to be playthings without being wives. I have striven so hard to be proper; but when girls read everything, why should not an old women write anything?'²

Lady Carbury's experience as a proper wife certainly invalidates conventional expectations for love in marriage. Lady Carbury's history resembles that of the Victorian sensation heroine and exemplifies "the sexual frustrations of young women married to old men [which] counter the Victorian idealization of

these December-May marriages."³ At eighteen, Lady Carbury marries a retired military officer who "occasionally spoilt his darling and occasionally ill-used her" (I, p. 12). When she tried to escape Sir Patrick's physical abuse, he spread the scandal that she ran away with another man. Like Julia Brabazon, Lady Carbury performs her wifely duty by returning home to nurse her husband through the last stages of alcoholism and senility. Although she reconciles with Sir Patrick, her one brief act of self-preservation pursues her throughout the rest of her career: "...her name would for the remainder of her life be unjustly tarnished" (I, p. 14).

The death of the husband operates as a welcome release.⁴ For Lady Carbury, widowhood represents an opportunity for unprecedented freedom, "a period of relaxation--her reward, her freedom, her chance of happiness" (I, p. 14). She establishes herself and her children in London, beginning a literary career to supplement her income from Sir Patrick's meagre estate. She aspires toward recognition rather than respectability, and she rejects love altogether: "The time for love had gone by, and she would have nothing to do with it" (I, p. 14).

Ironically, Lady Carbury's "tarnished reputation" offers her peculiar advantages, one of which is that

she can lead an unconventional life. The literary world despises Lady Carbury as an authoress, but her notoriety makes her a colorful social addition. Lady Carbury exploits her sensational history as appropriate background for her book on criminal women. Mr. Broune is willing to publish her bad books in exchange for flirtation. They both understand the tacit agreement of their business association. Lady Carbury only wants her books to sell and to receive good publicity; Mr. Broune is susceptible to pretty women. Their quasi-professional partnership is based on mutual deceit: "...she smiled and whispered, and made confidences, and looked out of her own eyes into men's eyes as though there might be some mysterious bond between her and them--if only mysterious circumstances would permit it" (I, p. 3).

In many respects, Lady Carbury is a social outcast: she is a literary fraud, a compromised woman, a brazen opportunist. Rather than use her femininity to uphold Victorian ideals and morals, she trades on her sexuality to gain financial and social benefits. If Lady Carbury's life violates the idealization of the Victorian woman, her values are nonetheless supported by the actual workings of her society.

The plot of The Way We Live Now involves the machinations of highly-placed men to marry the daughter

of the American robber baron, Augustus Melmotte. Like Lady Carbury, Melmotte is a fraud and an opportunist, but society accords him a prominent social place in exchange for the financial benefits he offers impoverished aristocrats through marriage to his daughter.

As an heiress, Marie Melmotte is the greatest potential source of financial gain for the dissolute young men-about-town, just as she is Melmotte's strongest vehicle to gain social acceptance, if not respectability. Melmotte's wealth allows him to bargain with Marie's future, setting conditions for a marriage settlement with all the aristocratic families in the running for Marie's hand. Lord Nidderdale is Melmotte's chosen connection, but Marie inopportunately falls in love with Lady Carbury's degenerate son Felix.

Lady Carbury's family provides a loose anchor for the panoramic plot of The Way We Live Now. Sir Felix is the prime contestant for the Marie Melmotte sweepstakes, Trollope's openly satirical designation of the mercenary marriage contract. Felix's sister Hetta is the conventional heroine of the novel, torn between her mother's ambition for an advantageous match and her own love for an unheroic suitor. Lady Carbury encourages Felix to pursue Marie and nearly insists that Hetta marry her country squire cousin Roger.

Hetta is in love with Paul Montague, a distant relative of Roger Carbury. During a business trip to America, however, Paul becomes engaged to Mrs. Hurtle, a notorious American widow. Roger persuades Paul to end his precipitous engagement, but then becomes Paul's rival for Hetta. The rivalry allows Trollope to explore the effects of the mercenary marriage in relation to male responses to two women, one who is properly feminine and one who is beyond the strictures of propriety.

Hetta's marriage problems are complicated by both financial and romantic considerations. Her mother wants her to marry to secure maintenance. Lady Carbury is distressed by Hetta's "unrealistic, romantic view of life" and advises her daughter to consider the ways of the world: 'The world at large has to eat dry bread, and cannot get cakes and sweetmeats. A girl, when she thinks of giving herself to a husband, has to remember this. If she has a fortune of her own she can pick and choose, but if she have none she must allow herself to be chosen' (II, pp. 384-85).

Lady Carbury's advice both belies and underscores her own experience and the general practice of marriage which she sees in the world around her. Marie Melmotte, for instance, has her own fortune, but she is forced by violence to accede to her father's wishes for

her marriage. When she asserts her right of choice, he beats her. Lady Carbury herself, as a girl without a fortune, suffers abuse in a marriage contracted under the dry bread principle. The men Hetta and Marie choose are themselves far cries from cakes and sweetmeats. Felix is an unenthusiastic lover, who scorns the romantic twaddle he mouths to please Marie. Paul Montague is another Harry Clavering.

In letters to Mary Holmes, Trollope comments on the failings of the novel's hero and heroine: "The character [of Paul Montague] is badly done throughout, and fails in interest. Hetta also is bad.... Hetta &c were uninteresting."⁵ Characteristically, Trollope excuses Paul on the basis of the reader's erroneous expectations for fictional heroism: "He is not a hero. But men are seldom heroes. He is as good as our brothers and sons and friends."⁶ Judged according to the novel itself, Trollope's comments on The Way We Live Now seem particularly guileful. Being as good as the brothers and sons in this novel is ironic condemnation, not exculpation. Hetta's lover and brother belong to the same dissolute club and live according to the amoral philosophy of the Beargarden, "the express view of combining parsimony with profligacy" (I, p. 24).

Hetta fulfills her role as the heroine of the

novel by being uninteresting. Yet to say that her character is badly done does not recognize her affinity with the other women characters in the novel. Despite her mother's angry insistence, Hetta continually rejects Roger Carbury as a suitor, refusing to sacrifice herself for mercenary or family interests: "But yet she was disposed to do battle with her mother and her cousin in the matter--if only with the object of showing that she would not submit her own feelings to their control. She was savage to the point of rebellion against all authority" (II, p. 377). Even as the novel's genius girl, Hetta rebels against interference in the most intimate aspect of her life. She fails as an interesting character because, choosing endurance over action, she makes little effort to secure her future. In this respect, she differs from the anti-heroines. Nevertheless, Trollope juxtaposes Hetta and Mrs. Hurtle to create a parallel between the heroine and her rival.

Hetta visits Mrs. Hurtle to confront her about the real state of Paul's affections. Mrs. Hurtle, more direct still, writes furious letters to Paul and confronts him with his double-dealing. Trollope's correspondence reveals that his contemporary readers reacted negatively to Mrs. Hurtle's assertiveness. To a modern reader, Mrs. Hurtle is the most remarkable

character of the novel. Trollope diplomatically responds to criticisms by insisting on Mrs. Hurtle's importance to the novel: "... you are quite right in saying that Mrs. Hurtle, (who is well done) is kept too long on the stage. But she was wanted to give an interest to the last chapters...."⁷ Mrs. Hurtle is a source of conflict throughout the novel, the subject of controversy between Paul and his cousin and lover before she even appears. Mrs. Hurtle is more than an anti-heroine, more than a mere social rebel: she is genuinely an outlaw.

Even though Mrs. Hurtle's past in the American West includes a duel, a divorce, and possibly adultery, she is still, like Lady Carbury and Marie Melmotte, threatened with physical abuse.⁸ Rather than run away or submit stoically to beatings, Mrs. Hurtle defends herself against her husband with a gun. Rather than rely on maintenance, she retains control of her money after her divorce. She kills a man in self-defense in Oregon. She pursues Paul to England and threatens to horsewhip him when he jilts her. She lives up to her nickname, "the wildcat." Her own assessment of her creed for living seems remarkably understated: 'I have little respect for the proprieties of life' (II, p. 446).

Mrs. Hurtle represents an important extension of

the anti-heroines of the earlier novels. Lady Mason and Julia Brabazon, for instance, maintain many of the proprieties of Victorian feminine gentility. Mrs. Hurtle's explosiveness is not consonant with any version of the angel of the house. By making her an American, Trollope allows himself latitude with an unorthodox woman character struggling against the hypocrisy of Victorian society. Trollope allows Mrs. Hurtle unprecedented behavior for a woman and yet complicates her masculine aggressiveness by stressing her essential femininity. She is both vitriolic and generous, full of both anger and kindness. Despite her own disappointment in love, she facilitates the marriage of the housemaid in her lodgings and pours attention on the children of her landlady.

Much of Mrs. Hurtle's anger results from the dual expectations for women in society. She has charm and beauty to attract men, but Paul wishes her to moderate the force of her personality, including even her feminine demonstrations of affection: "He did not want to see her raging like a tigress, as he had once thought might be his fate; but he would have preferred the continuance of moderate resentment to this flood of tenderness" (II, p. 446). Paul in effect expects her to sacrifice her sense of self for the sake of social propriety. Mrs. Hurtle realizes that self-assertion is

central to her survival as an independent woman:

To give up not only her love, but her wrath also;--that was too much for her! The idea of being tame was terrible to her. Her life had not been very prosperous, but she was what she was because she had dared to protect herself by her own spirit. Now, at last, should she succumb and be trodden on like a worm? Should she be weaker even than an English girl?... Had not her whole life been opposed to the theory of such passive endurance? (II, pp. 3-4).

Mrs. Hurtle astutely observes that the cult of feminine passivity is a male construct which benefits men. Paul cannot believe that any woman, under any circumstance, should threaten to retaliate against male abuse. Mrs. Hurtle is not chastened by accusations of unfeminine behavior but focuses on the motivation behind feminine docility: 'It is certainly more comfortable for gentlemen,--who amuse themselves,--that women should have that opinion' (II, p. 8). She questions the validity of gender distinctions altogether as she points out the oppression of chivalry for most women:

'As long as there are men to fight for women, it may be well to leave the fighting to the men.

But when a woman has no one to help her, is she to

bear everything without turning upon those who ill-use her? Shall a woman be flayed alive because it is unfeminine in her to fight for her own skin? What is the good of being--feminine, as you call it?...That men may be attracted, I should say. But if a woman finds that men only take advantage of her assumed weakness, shall she not throw it off? If she be treated as prey, shall she not fight as a beast of prey? (II, p. 8).

Mrs. Hurtle possesses the rhetorical skills to leave Paul with an unanswerable question. Why should perceptions of femininity include victimization?

With varying degrees of vigor and success, Mrs. Hurtle, Lady Carbury, Marie Melmotte, and even Hetta resist victimization, rejecting the Victorian assumption that such ill-treatment is an inevitable part of women's lives. The various machinations to contract marriages for money most reveal society's primary means to victimize women, calling into question the morality of Victorian marriage rituals. Marie Melmotte, particularly, is victim to society's adulterated conception of marriage, but she also becomes the most stridently independent character as a result of her social education. After two blatantly mercenary proposals by Lord Nidderdale, an aborted

elopement with Sir Felix, and the brutal persuasion of her father, Marie learns to suspect romance, reject love, and control her money as her most effective means to achieve autonomy.

In The Way We Live Now, the stories of the women characters continually parallel. The male responses to the women disclose the hollowness of the cult of the genius girl. For example, Hetta realizes that Mrs. Hurtle surpasses her in all the feminine graces and yet understands that, accordingly, "[Mrs. Hurtle] would be an unfit wife for Paul Montague..." (II, p. 390). Lord Nidderdale, on the other hand, becomes more attracted to Marie Melmotte only after she displays self-assertion in setting her own conditions for their marriage arrangements:

As far as the girl herself was concerned, she had, in these latter days, become much more attractive to him than when he had first known her. She certainly was not a fool. And, though, he could not tell himself that she was altogether like a lady, still she had a manner of her own which made him think that she would be able to live with ladies (II, p. 222).

Lord Nidderdale's revised perception of Marie as an interesting woman, and Marie's own choice for her life, confound the premise of conventional love stories

which relegate women to only passive roles. Unlike Paul Montague, Lord Nidderdale does not find a lack of conventional femininity to indicate a woman's unsuitability as a wife. He is able to perceive, albeit dimly, that being lady-like may entail complex definition. Further, Marie agrees to marry Nidderdale only on terms of honesty and equality: '... it's just as well for both of us to look on it as business.... I think you are a very good fellow; only you don't care for me.... I won't say that I love you. But if ever I do say it, you may be sure it will be true' (II, pp. 221-22).

As a result of her exploitation on the marriage market, Marie learns to insist on treatment which recognizes her real worth as a person. Melmotte's suicide after his social and financial ruin releases Marie from the Nidderdale engagement and allows her to make her own choices for her life. Actually, she is a greater heiress after her father's death because she then has unfettered control of her own money. She recognizes her position of strength. Her choices reflect a desire to maintain power and avoid future humiliation:

In these days of her grandeur, in which she had danced with princes, and seen an emperor in her father's house, and been affianced to lords, she

had encountered degradation which had been abominable to her.... But go where she might, she would now be her own mistress. That was the one resolution she succeeded in forming...(II, p. 310).

While hobnobbing with the aristocrats, Marie found her treatment as a marriageable woman anything but noble. Consequently, independence, rather than marriage to some lord, is her preferred state.

Marie eventually accepts the suit of Mr. Hamilton K. Fisker, her father's American business partner. As with Lord Nidderdale, she sets the terms for their engagement, based on honesty and sound business rather than love and romance: "She had contrived to learn that, in the United States, a married woman has greater power over her own money than in England, and this information acted strongly in Fisker's favour" (II, p. 453). Both Marie and Mrs. Hurtle leave England for California on the same ship: "the ladies were determined that they never would revisit a country of which their reminiscences certainly were not happy" (II, pp. 456-57). Trollope allows both women to seek new territories with brazen independence. Marie, who is originally the most victimized woman, finally keeps company with the woman who most strongly rejects victimization throughout the novel. Both women can

exercise their roughly hewn independence and individualism on the American frontier.

With the histories of Marie Melmotte and Mrs. Hurtle, Trollope reverses expectations for appropriate endings for sensational heroines. Unlike Lady Audley, they are not punished by madness for their "unfeminine assertiveness" but are rewarded by new possibilities. Unlike Mrs. Henry Wood's Lady Isabel Carlyle, they reject suffering to control new prospects. In Wood's East Lynne, Lady Isabel encounters grisly retribution after running away with a lover. When her illegitimate child dies, she returns home, in disguise as a governess, to nurse her son on his deathbed, losing not only her family but her whole identity. Marie and Mrs. Hurtle demand recognition of their independent selves. They cannot achieve the conventional fate of the heroine by doing so, but neither must they suffer the doomed lot of the sensation heroine.

As anti-heroines, Marie Melmotte and Mrs. Hurtle escape the social repressions of Victorian society by rejecting their prescribed role for women--that is to be a wife. But Trollope does not end his attack on the marriage market with the departure of the anti-heroines from England. He also examines several courtships which culminate in marriage but which fail

to promise the happy ending of the conventional marriage plot.

The marriages of Lady Carbury, Georgiana Longestaffe, and Hetta are each filled with tension and entail the forms of abasement that Marie repudiates and that Mrs. Hurtle combats. Lady Carbury marries Mr. Broune after he rescues her from the financial disaster and social disgrace caused by her son's role in the Melmotte affair. She is forced to admit the failure of her schemes for herself and her children, essentially conceding her own worthlessness. Mr. Broune seems heroic in the midst of the Melmotte ruin, but he becomes more tyrannical as he gains power over her circumstances: "Though he was hard to her now,--he who used to be so soft,--he was very good. It did not occur to her to rebel against him.... The more she thought of him, the more omnipotent he seemed to be. The more she thought of herself, the more absolutely prostrate she seemed to have fallen..." (II, p. 461).

Lady Carbury does not experience a sense of rejuvenation from her moral epiphany or from Mr. Broune's proposal:

Her opinion of herself was so poor, she had become so sick of her own vanities and littlenesses and pretences, that she could not understand that such a man as this should in truth

want to make her his wife. At this moment she thought less of herself and more of Mr. Broune than either perhaps deserved (II, p. 463).

This passage offers an extraordinary departure from conventional expectations for love and marriage. Lady Carbury becomes less of a person as a result of her gratitude for Mr. Broune. Trollope's comment on her self-abasement shrewdly points out the fallacy behind women's indebtedness toward the men who rescue them by marriage. Lady Carbury's renunciation of selfishness may be good, but it is precipitated for the wrong reasons--or, perhaps more accurately, with harmful effect. Mr. Broune is not truly deserving of her adoration. In fact, his second proposal is almost an insult: "Of course he had renewed his offer of marriage, but he had done so in a tone which almost made her feel that the proposition could not be an earnest one" (II, p. 463).

Lady Carbury's abjection in her marriage to Mr. Broune reproduces the self-abasement she experienced in her first marriage. In both cases, she is reduced to a suppliant. She believes she deserves mortification as punishment for her social ambitions. Accepting humiliation allows her to "redeem" herself for attempting to pursue independently the values of society.

The subplot involving Georgiana Longestaffe is even more overtly satiric than Lady Carbury's story. Georgiana's marriage woes underscore the actual selflessness behind her apparently selfish quest to find maintenance. Like Lady Carbury, Georgiana's attitude toward love and marriage is formed by the values which operate around her. She conducts her hapless manhunt according to those values.

The Longstaffe family is highly-placed but impoverished. They maintain their position at the expense of their own comfort. The squire's notions of gentility include expenditure and exploitation as natural elements of his life as a gentleman:

"There were no doubt gentlemen of different degrees, but the English gentleman of gentlemen was he who had land, and family title-deeds, and an old family place, and family portraits, and family embarrassments, and a family absence of any usual employment" (I, p. 116). With its emphasis on the man's place, this idea of the family seems to exclude women altogether. Whereas a gentleman may be idle and wasteful, Georgiana, as a gentleman's daughter, must find proper employment in seeking a rich husband.

At thirty, Georgiana faces an up-hill battle on the marriage market. Her snobbishness about family position prevented her from accepting several marriage

offers in earlier days, but her eventual desperation to find a husband leads her to contract reckless alliances. She first compromises her reputation by visiting the Melmottes and then loses caste completely by engaging herself to Melmotte's business partner, a Jewish financier.

In actuality, Georgiana's requirements for marriage are few and shallow. She wants a house in town and money enough to visit London for the season every year. Since social position no longer indicates adequate wealth among her circle, she must look for economic advantages in new spheres. Georgiana's selfishness is really self-abasement. She never asks for a husband she can love, or even like. She does not seek marriage to please herself, but only seeks the money and position adequate to meet the demands of her social circle. Like Lady Carbury, Georgiana looks about her and spurns personal fulfillment in marriage: 'Who thinks about love nowadays? I don't know any one who loves any one else' (II, p. 425).

Through Georgiana's harsh comment on her society, Trollope extends his recurring criticism of romantic love as a false construct. In Georgiana's world, no form of love exists. Her father and brother fight each other for control of property; she and her sisters fight over suitors. With all the world pursuing the

Melotte millions, Georgiana merely joins the general hunt for wealth. Society's reaction to her engagement to Mr. Brehgert epitomizes the double standard for men and women concerning the mercenary marriage. Although lords may pursue an alliance with Melotte, of unknown origin, Georgiana cannot remain a respectable girl if she marries Brehgert, an honest businessman.

Georgiana's marriage choices reflect Trollope's larger social criticism. Torn between choosing a wealthy husband or a husband who belongs to "the right set" (II, p. 138), Georgiana is unable to fulfill society's demand to achieve wealth and position through marriage. Trollope suggests that the values of the right set are as corrupt as the charlatanism of the Melotte crowd. The Longestaffe's anti-Semitism couples Mr. Brehgert unfairly with the underworld of Melotte's organization. Mr. Brehgert is himself kind and considerate of Georgiana's position. Their correspondence reveals Mr. Brehgert's unromantic but sensitive perspective on marriage as well as Georgiana's prejudices and mercenary motivations.

Mr. Brehgert's letter to Georgiana is not a love letter but a thoughtful explanation of his position. He addresses her with honesty and maturity and pays her the undeserved tribute of assuming she will respond in kind. He argues that society has changed enough to

allow a Jew to claim social equality in all circles. He takes her into his confidence concerning his financial retrenchments. He allows her the privilege of free choice that should be accorded to an adult woman. Most important, he offers the mutual honesty that Marie Melmotte, for instance, fights to achieve in her relationships with men:

'As to my own feelings they remain exactly as they were when I endeavoured to explain them to you. Though I do not find myself to be too old to marry, I do think myself too old to write love letters. I have no doubt you believe me when I say that I entertain a most sincere affection for you; and I beseech you to believe me in saying further that should you become my wife it shall be the study of my life to make you happy (II, p. 272).

Georgiana's response to Mr. Brehgert's letter is characteristically limited and bigoted. Despising love, she is nevertheless offended by Mr. Brehgert's lack of romance. Most of all, she is offended by his financial revelations. When she taxes him about losing his townhouse, he realizes her mercenary motives and breaks off the engagement. Georgiana is first humiliated by her engagement to Mr. Brehgert, then by his jilting her. She finally elopes with a curate,

completing her social disgrace. Although Georgiana's greed is reprehensible, her plight is pathetic. She is torn between conflicting expectations for her proper social role. As concerned as she is about society's expectations, she inevitably fails to meet them because they involve irreconcilable components. Marriage as practiced in society cannot accommodate the disparate elements of status and wealth or love and romance.⁹

Compared to Mrs. Hurtle's escape to the frontier, Georgiana's story is thoroughly disheartening. Georgiana and Lady Carbury both marry and remain within the boundaries of society, yet their futures seem dismal. Hetta Carbury, as the heroine, achieves union with the man she loves, but her marriage, too, is complicated by subjecting her to her cousin's patriarchal control.

Roger Carbury finally withdraws his self-interested objections to Hetta's marriage to Paul, but he manipulates her future through his position as head of the family. Although it has been argued that Roger is the novel's moral center, Trollope repeatedly shows that Roger's notions of gentility are intolerant and inadequate when put to moral test.¹⁰ Roger's notion of what constitutes high principle prevents him from responding compassionately or generously to anyone who does not live up to his standards.

Roger is no more free of the values of his age than those he most stringently criticizes. Although he professes to believe "that a man's standing in the world should not depend at all upon his wealth" (I, p. 49), he forbids Paul to marry Hetta because of financial considerations: 'You have neither of you a shilling in the world...and now you know what my feelings are you must abandon [your suit]' (I, p. 54).

Like the rest of his society, Roger supports the mercenary marriage, especially if it gives him an advantage over his rival. Possessing greater wealth and a higher social position than Paul, Roger invokes the supremacy of patriarchal authority to structure Hetta's marriage opportunities. Hetta offers him sisterly affection in an effort to resist the false fatherly role he tries to assume with her. Roger rejects the woman's terms of friendship. He begins to call Hetta his daughter and to provide her maintenance: 'You shall be all that I have in the world. I will hurry to grow old that I may feel for you as the old feel for the young. And if you have a child, Hetta, he must be my child' (II, p. 407).

Before he will make Hetta's son his heir, Roger requires that the child take his name in order to inherit Carbury Manor. Such a condition actually usurps Paul's paternity. To reconcile the family,

Hetta and Paul agree to move to Carbury Manor. Under Roger's surveillance, Hetta is placed in a paradoxical situation, living as a bride in the home of the man she rejected as a husband. Hetta faces a married life similar to that of Emma Woodhouse: she has two men to answer to as a married woman.

R.D. McMaster describes The Way We Live Now as a novel concerned with the search for authentic selfhood and sees the women characters as providing the most intricate elaboration of the theme.¹¹ Certainly the diversity of women characters permits them several possible endings. The extended storyline and array of characters also allows Trollope full scope to survey Victorian values, particularly the values surrounding marriage.

The anti-heroines manage to elude the duplicities of Victorian marriage. Marie Melmotte marries an American and on her own terms, too. Admittedly, Fisker is no ideal husband; he is a wheeler-dealer who wears loud suits. Still, he proves himself more honest in money matters than Marie's Beargarden suitors, and he agrees to her terms for marriage. Most important, Marie pleases her personal tastes by marrying him: "As to Fisker himself,--she certainly liked him" (II, p. 453). Mrs. Hurtle proves too dynamic altogether for the men she encounters and is too much of an

adventuress to accept the institutionalized images of women in Victorian England. A duellist and a divorcee, Mrs. Hurtle commits both social and legal crimes in the spirit of survival and self-defense. Unlike either Lady Mason or Julia Brabazon, she does not attempt to integrate her life as a woman with the values of society. Instead, she rejects the tenets of a society that tyrannizes over her selfhood as a woman.

Society, however, remains intact and unchanged at the end of The Way We Live Now. The Beargarden breaks up, but its members continue their hedonistic creed of live and let live. Lady Carbury is crushed by her failures; Georgiana Longestaffe is disgraced by her marriage; Hetta is neatly put away in the country, answerable to society's most conservative spokesman. The criminal women may outrage social propriety, but their actions champion individual rights over collective wrongs. The Way We Live Now thereby extends the social criticism Trollope limits to the family in The Claverings. The Way We Live Now may also be seen as a precursor to The Eustace Diamonds. Lizzie Eustace is part of Victorian society, not a maverick American. She openly embraces the values she sees covertly pursued--greed, self-interest, and sham--as an integral part of the way they lived then.

Politicizing the Tradition:

Lady Eustace and Dissimulation in The Eustace Diamonds

In The Way We Live Now, Trollope's anti-heroine challenges Victorian notions of proper feminine behavior to assert her self-hood as a woman. In The Eustace Diamonds, the anti-heroine manipulates Victorian expectations for femininity to create several images of herself to accommodate a wide variety of misadventures as she participates in high society intrigue. Lizzie Eustace is a thief, a liar, an accomplished actress, the heroine of society gossip and scandal. Unlike Mrs. Hurtle, Lizzie is an integral part of society, in fact, a celebrated member. Her peccadilloes, lies, and crimes are not particularly reprehensible in a world in which everyone participates in sham, opportunism, and human exploitation.

Trollope consolidates the sweeping social criticism of WWLN to centralize the plot of The Eustace Diamonds within the political sphere of the Palliser novels. Changes in allegiance, mercenary marriages, lies and poses are all part of a personally and socially factionalized world. To win support for her social infractions, Lizzie operates as a good politician, manipulating the system to her advantage. She seduces men, who control the legal system, and she

charms Lady Glencora Palliser, who controls the social system.

Lizzie's story combines legal, social, and moral crimes to explore a complex interweaving of criminality and morality as practiced and perceived by society.

Lizzie lives in a shadow world of blurred social distinctions. Her father, Admiral Greystock, "liked whist, wine--and wickedness in general"; her uncle, the Dean of Bobsborough, is a respectable clergyman.¹

Lizzie marries Sir Florian Eustace, a dying rake, who, like her father, "denied himself no pleasures" (p. 43).

Lizzie encounters both censure and acceptance through her marriage. Although Sir Florian is "vicious... dull of intellect, slow of discernment, blear-eyed in his ways about town..." society considers Lizzie a successful golddigger: "It was admitted by all her friends, and also by her enemies--who were in truth the more numerous and active body of the two--that Lizzie Greystock had done very well with herself" (pp. 39, 44).

Doing well for herself is a key part of Lizzie's character. The key to her success, however, is her ability to manipulate male perceptions to coincide with accepted images of conventional womanhood. Without male support, Lizzie sifts her way through labyrinthine social machinery. She acts the part of a proper and

virtuous lady as an essential strategy to gain wealth and position through marriage. She convinces Sir Florian that she is truth, beauty, and purity incarnate despite her purely mercenary motives for marrying. When Sir Florian realizes her essential falseness, he is devastated by the discovery that her womanly appearance is not an index of her character. Unlike any of the anti-heroines we have so far examined, Lizzie does not experience dissonance because of the disparity between her inner self and the roles she plays. As Juliet McMaster perceptively notes, Lizzie in fact has "no centre of identity...no real self inside."² Lizzie necessarily assumes false poses as part of her role as a woman in society.

Lizzie is a student of the woman's art. She is a complex blend of the natural and unnatural, both the epitome and the antithesis of the feminine ideal image. Because the image itself is manufactured, Lizzie cannot truly be a natural woman and still reflect the image. She works hard to achieve expectations of proper femininity without possessing the requisite inner tenderness that is supposed to accompany outward beauty. Much of her understanding, significantly, comes from texts, the fictionalized versions of womanhood available to her:

We have said that she was clever. We must add

that she had in truth studied too much. She spoke French, understood Italian, and read German. She played well on the harp, and moderately well on the piano. She sang, at least in good taste and in tune. Of things to be learned by reading she knew much, having really taken diligent trouble with herself. She had learned much poetry by heart, and could apply it. She forgot nothing, listened to everything, understood quickly, and was desirous to shine not only as a beauty but as a wit (p. 56).

Lizzie understands well what men admire in women and cultivates those qualities to near perfection. She fails in being truly perfect because she fails in being true. Lizzie's falseness is conditioned for her by the false expectations for women in society. To be socially successful, she must be beautiful, well-educated, tender, and virtuous--in other words, she must be perfect. Lizzie is perfect in form, if not in substance. The narrator stresses Lizzie's simulated perfection: "... her form was perfectly symmetrical. Her feet and hands might have been taken as models by a sculptor....she wore [her hair] bound tight round her perfect forehead.... Her chin was perfect..." (pp. 54-55). At the same time, the narrator comments that all of these marks of feminine perfection fail to achieve

true "feminine tenderness" (p. 55).

Lizzie does everything right to become the image of the perfect woman. The image, which is meant to exhibit character, reveals only talent; the image itself is static. The narrator suggests why Lizzie's perfect figure fails to conform to the image: "If [her figure] had a fault it was this--that it had in it too much of movement.... for she was much given to action" (p. 54). Lizzie's energy belies the tableau-like image she tries to reproduce. Paradoxically, her activity is what helps her to create a dazzling facsimile of a passive woman.

Society actually encourages Lizzie's poses by making her the star of the season's social gossip. As a rich and beautiful young widow, Lizzie is equipped to act as both huntress and prey in the marriage market. She takes possession of Sir Florian's appropriately named Scottish seat, Portray Castle, and she appropriates the family jewels as part of her widow's settlement. The diamonds are the catalyst for Lizzie's legal embroilments and also the reason for her social success. Stealing the family heirlooms provides her with a glitter that elevates her to the center of society's attention.

In contrast to the anti-heroines of the earlier novels, Lizzie is embraced by society because of her

crime. Julia Brabazon, for instance, shares a similar history, but she is shunned after Lord Ongar's death, even by her own family. As a glamorous and notorious widow, Lizzie is a welcome addition to high society. She is not exiled to life abroad, in isolation, as a result of her crime. Instead, Lizzie openly courts and is courted by a host of suitors and freeloaders. She gathers an entourage of social hangers-on to give herself a semblance of respectability while she juggles her prospective husbands. Lizzie's acceptance in high society is also a striking contrast to Marie Melmotte's exploitation in The Way We Live Now. The difference lies in Lizzie's response to her social position. Rather than become a victim, she uses the pose of victimization to cover her misdeeds. The sophisticated world of the Palliser novels is not threatened, only titillated, by a thorough-going adventuress like Lizzie Eustace. She is a useful social ornament and a potential source of wealth to fortune-hunting social politicians. She is therefore tolerated, even indulged, in her melodramatic role.

Lizzie seduces her cousin, Frank Greystock, even as she accepts Lord Fawn's marriage proposal. Frank and Lord Fawn are political as well as romantic rivals. Opposites in many ways, their motivations with Lizzie are identical. Frank is charismatic whereas Lord Fawn

is dull. But both are poor and look on Lizzie as an attractive source of income to finance their careers and advance their social positions.

Just as Lizzie married Sir Florian for his money, her suitors subsequently court her to profit from his wealth. Mercenary motives are sanctioned for ambitious men, however. Lord Fawn possesses none of Sir Florian's mistaken romanticism about women, but still assumes that Lizzie will meet his requirements as a wife without considering that he should offer anything in return:

Lord Fawn thought a great deal about money....
Such a man almost naturally looks to marriage as an assistance in the dreary fight. It soon becomes clear to him that he cannot marry without money, and he learns to think that heiresses have been invented exactly to suit his case.... As for giving anything away, that is out of the question. He has not been so placed as to be able to give.... The lady had an income. That was the first and most indispensable consideration (pp. 113-116).

Lizzie's character is unimportant as long as she is attractive and wealthy enough to meet her suitor's requirements. Lizzie may lack self-realization, but her inner self is never valued and therefore never

cultivated. Lord Fawn views Lizzie only as a convenience designed for his benefit: "... he knew nothing about her, and had not taken the slightest trouble to make inquiry... yet Lord Fawn was quite content to marry her, not having seen any reason why she should not make a good wife" (p. 117).

As a lawyer, Frank defends Lizzie's theft. As a cabinet under-secretary, Lord Fawn censures her for retaining her hold on the Eustace family jewels. Frank is willing to ignore Lizzie's guilt to act as her public champion. Lord Fawn is more concerned about public opinion than about Lizzie's criminality. He vacillates between keeping and breaking their engagement as public sympathy for Lizzie's position shifts:

He, too, had found a change in general opinion about the diamonds. When he had taken upon himself with a high hand to dissolve his own engagement, everybody had, as he thought, acknowledged that Lizzie Eustace was keeping property which did not belong to her. Now people talked of her losses as though the diamonds had been her own (p. 545).

Although Lizzie undoubtedly keeps property that is not her own, the legal question remains unsettled, mainly because of public reluctance to prosecute a pretty and

seductive woman. The moral question is clear enough, but instead of condemning Lizzie's crime the world would rather enjoy the entertainment she provides on the social scene.

In the arena of social scandal, Lizzie's engagement to Lord Fawn is treated as a political issue. Lord Fawn weighs the merits of marriage to Lizzie in terms of his political career and social approbation:

He would again offer his hand--acknowledging himself bound to do so by his former offer--but would give reasons why she should not accept it. If anything should occur in the meantime which would, in his opinion, justify him in again repudiating her, he would, of course, take advantage of such circumstance. If asked himself what was his prevailing motive in all that he did or intended to do, he would have declared that it was above all things necessary that he should 'put himself right in the eye of the British public' (p. 644).

Lizzie, too, recognizes the importance of the public eye regarding her marriage. Publicity is the only way to ensure an engagement in a world of precarious honor. At the first sign of Lord Fawn's impending defection, Lizzie advertises the engagement to guarantee the

attachment. She writes a series of letters revealing the engagement to her estranged aunt, Lady Linlithgow, the Eustace family, Frank Greystock, and Lord Fawn's mother, covering all the possible factions concerned with her remarriage. More clever and energetic than her betrothed, Lizzie counters Lord Fawn's caution by mobilizing her offensive to attack his weakest point: "Lord Fawn was, therefore, well aware that Lady Eustace had published the engagement. It was known to everybody, and could not be broken off without public scandal" (p. 142).

Although Lizzie is intensely practical in keeping Lord Fawn, she pretends to deep feelings of romanticism. Lizzie is well-read in Romantic poetry and, as a result of her reading, nurses a penchant for Byronic Corsairs. Lizzie selects false models to dream about and to emulate, but her familiarity with the ways of her world helps her discriminate between men and protect herself. She realizes that none of her suitors are Corsair material, but she invests them with enough of the romantic to suit her moods and requirements as an independent woman. For instance, a liaison with her cousin provides interest without complications: "Frank was not the exact hero that her fancy had painted--but he was sufficiently heroic" (pp. 106-107).

Lizzie is able to flaunt stolen diamonds and

create melodramatic scenes without social censure, but she realizes that blatant sexual indiscretions represent social death for women. As a single woman, Lizzie recognizes the value of an engagement as a means to increase her social position. While affianced, she achieves a position of power without the constraint of marriage: "She felt that a woman by herself in the world can do nothing, and that an unmarried woman's strength lies only in the expectation that she should be married" (p. 758). This shows a fine distinction. Lizzie is not interested in marriage for the sake of romance but only as a means to gain social strength. Because marriage may precipitate male dominance in her life, she prefers only the expectation of marriage without consummation. Her choices in men are often astute in this respect. She marries Sir Florian, knowing he is under a death sentence. She engages herself to the respectable Lord Fawn, knowing his reluctance to finalize the marriage. She proposes to Frank Greystock, knowing he is already engaged to another girl.

Indeed, love and marriage are separately compartmentalized in Lizzie's understanding. Marriage, or at least the expectation of marriage, ensures a cover of respectability for her independent pursuits. Love, or at least the illusion of love, provides an

avocation or at least an entertaining game. Whereas Lizzie actively campaigns to contract marriage arrangements, she daydreams about love more than she actually seeks it:

Somebody, in speaking on Lady Eustace's behalf, and making the best of her virtues, had declared that she did not have lovers. Hitherto that had been true of her--but her mind had not the less dwelt on the delight of a lover. She still thought of a possible Corsair who would be willing to give up all but his vices for her love, and for whose sake she would be willing to share even them. It was but a dream, but nevertheless it pervaded her fancy constantly. Lord Fawn--peer of Parliament, and member of Her Majesty's Government, as he was--could not have been such a lover to her. Might it not be possible that there should exist something of romance between her and her cousin Frank? She was the last woman in the world to run away with a man, or to endanger her position by a serious indiscretion; but there might, perhaps, be a something between her and her cousin--a liaison quite correct in its facts, a secret understanding, if nothing more--a mutual sympathy, which should be chiefly shown in the abuse of all their friends--and in this she could

indulge her passion for romance and poetry (p. 136).

This passage reveals important conflicting motivations behind Lizzie's social machinations as well as her understanding of social proprieties. Even as she dreams about an anti-social, rebellious lover with whom she can share the vices traditionally allowed only to sexually assertive males, she also includes a respectable husband in her fantasy life as necessary for her social acceptance. She presupposes that respectability precludes sexuality or romance. Yet even Lizzie's sexual fantasies are peculiarly tame. She wishes only for a correct affair of mutual understanding that will allow her to communicate her anger toward proper society. Lizzie's fantasy life indicates her frustration with the respectable life she imitates without passion.

Even Lizzie's most dramatic seduction scenes are self-consciously enacted rather than passionately felt. Much of The Eustace Diamonds is remarkably sexually suggestive and as such hardly supports the common perception of Trollope as a "proper" novelist interested only in "pretty, pious, half-comical, domestic love--love within the bounds of social law."³ Lizzie's use of sexuality resembles the passion of the sensation heroine, an act of social rebellion

characterized by criminality and eroticism.⁴ By playing the part of the seductress and heroine, Lizzie is able to exercise power in the role of the sexual aggressor.

The key hunt scene is central to an understanding of Lizzie's quest for sexual and social potency. The hunt reveals Lizzie's conflicting roles as both huntress and prey: "Mounted on a bright-skinned, lively steed, with her cousin on one side and Lord George de Bruce Carruthers on the other, with all the hunting world of her own county civil around her, and a fox just found in Craighattan Gorse, what could the heart of woman desire more? This was to live" (p. 387).

One does not need an especially Freudian turn of mind to notice the sexual implications of the hunt scene. Lizzie exults in her companionate ride with Lord George, experiencing new sensations in the company of her most Corsair-like suitor: "Over went Lord George, and she followed him almost without losing the stride of her horse. Surely in all the world there was nothing equal to this.... She was so glad now that he had not spared for price in mounting her" (pp. 388-89). Even more than indicating sexual gratification, the experience points out Lizzie's desire to gain masculine equality by becoming the pursuer during the hunt: "Oh, if she could only pass them, and get up to those men

whom she saw before her!" (p. 389).

Lizzie's delight in the hunt is tempered by her dim awareness of her dual role. Her financial independence allows her the place of first lady of the hunt, but also preempts any privilege to be treated like a lady. She not only provides lodging for her suitors but purchases their equipment for the hunt as well. Lizzie literally pays for her sexuality by financing her suitors' recreational pursuit of her: "Young women generally pay for nothing: and it was very hard that she, who was quite a young woman, should have to pay for all. But she smiled, and accepted the proposition" (p. 384). In exchange for freedom and power, Lizzie must still feign the proper lady-like attitude: smile and endure it. Lizzie covertly pursues a deviant course while she overtly assumes the conventional pose. No wonder that Lizzie is unable to achieve self-realization, "unreal as she was to herself" (p. 386).

Lizzie's failure to reach self-realization is the result of her ability to perform social roles. That Lizzie ultimately fails in society suggests that the roles themselves are false. Lizzie's romantic entanglements are grouped with those of her foils, Lucinda Roanoke and Lucy Morris. Lucinda is the niece of Mrs. Carbuncle, Lizzie's permanent house guest and

dubious duenna. Lucy Morris is the conventional heroine of the novel, Frank Greystock's long-suffering fiancée. Lucinda and Lucy play conventional social and fictional roles and, like Lizzie, they fail to achieve the promised success of those roles.

Lucinda is Lizzie's twin in many ways. Her family background is ambiguous; society speculates that she is the illegitimate daughter of Mrs. Carbuncle and Lord George de Bruce Carruthers. As a beauty without fortune, Lucinda enters the marriage market with even fewer resources than Lizzie. Marriage is her means to achieve maintenance whereas a second marriage for Lizzie is a means to infiltrate higher social circles. Lucinda must market her one advantage carefully to make herself the object of male desire, although the narrator notes that she scorns the role:

It must be presumed that Lucinda Roanoke was in want of a husband, and yet no girl seemed to take less pains to get one. A girl ought not to be always busying herself to bring down a man, but a girl ought to give herself some charms... but Lucinda Roanoke stood aloof and despised everybody (p. 368).

Lucinda arouses a violent admiration in Sir Griffin Tewett, a middle-aged roue, because of her frigidity and antipathy for him. Lucinda's aloofness

makes her more desirable but also makes her subject to greater displays of violence from her future husband.⁵ Sir Griffin gives Lucinda the strategic advantage of the pursued with the understanding that he can make her pay for her cool treatment after their marriage: "He had no idea of giving up the chase, but he thought that perhaps he would take it out of her when she became Lady Tewett" (pp. 400-401).

Lucinda participates in the hunt, but her experience counters Lizzie's. A momentary liberation for Lizzie, for Lucinda, the hunt represents a desperate escape from the drawing-room facade of her daily social pose: "There was a savageness of antipathy in her to the mode of life which her circumstances had produced for her. It was that very savageness which made her ride so hard, and which forbade her to smile and be pleasant to people whom she could not like" (p. 401). Lucinda is unable to muster the plastic smile Lizzie manages in response to her social exploitation. Trollope compares the fate of both girls in the larger hunt: Lizzie leaps the fences successfully; Lucinda falls off her horse into a mire.

Lucinda larger "fall" begins when she accepts Sir Griffin to please her aunt by making a financially advantageous match. Although Sir Griffin is repellent to her, he at first seems no worse than other suitors:

"...it seemed to her that all men who came near her were men whom she could not fail to dislike.... Why not Sir Griffin as well as any other fool?" (p. 401). Lucinda does not invest her pursuers with false romance, but neither does she discriminate between potential husbands. Lizzie dupes her followers by playing the false feminine roles which Lucinda scorns. Yet Lucinda's clarity of perception fails to protect her from a foolish choice for marriage: "It may be doubted whether she knew how obstinate, how hard, how cruel to a woman a fool can be" (p. 401).

It may also be doubted whether Lucinda is any more true to herself than Lizzie. She disdains her social role. Scorning the part does not protect her from playing it or experiencing its consequences. She still agrees to marry a man she abhors. Lizzie tries to invent a man who will please her as a lover; Lucinda accepts a man who makes her recoil. For Lucinda, Sir Griffin's kiss represents a psychological rape and compels her to desperate measures to break the engagement. She threatens murder or suicide or a retreat into madness if she is forced to go through with the marriage: 'I shall never be married to him. How I shall escape from him--by dying, or going mad--or by destroying him, God only knows.... If he comes for ever and ever and ever he shall never touch me again;--

not alive; he shall never touch me alive' (pp. 670, 677).

Lucinda pays a high price for seeking a mercenary marriage or for accepting the whole construct of the marriage market. Even though she refuses to don a false identity, she continues to participate in the accepted social tenets which dictate feminine roles. Lucy Morris, by contrast, performs both her social and fictional roles in an exemplary fashion. Lucy is, like Jane Eyre, a poor, plain, and obscure governess, but without the force of Jane's personality or the complications of Jane's love life. Lucy's love problems are, in fact, pedestrian, but no less humiliating than Lucinda's. The difference is in her response to Frank's neglect and infidelity.

Lucy fills the role of conventional heroine in The Eustace Diamonds. Lucy's introduction in the novel displays the narrator's typical disinterest in the conventional woman as a focus for the narrative. Lizzie achieves prominence because she "did so many things, made so many efforts, caused so much suffering to others, and suffered so much herself" (p. 57). Lucy does little but suffer while she stands by her man. In the earlier novels, Trollope uses the conventional heroine to fulfill popular expectations, but the narrator of The Eustace Diamonds does not even

"dare to put forward Lucy Morris as a heroine" (p. 57).

Like Lucinda Roanoke, Lucy is paired with Lizzie to emphasize the divergent possibilities Lizzie creates for herself. Lizzie and Lucy come from similar backgrounds: "Lady Eustace and Lucy Morris had known each other for many years--had indeed been children together--there having been some old family friendship between the Greystocks and the Morrises" (p. 57). Lizzie and Lucy are also rivals for Frank Greystock. Lucy wins the contest through endurance rather than through perseverance. Lizzie manages her marriage possibilities by keeping several men on her string even as she ties them to her through seduction or publicity. Frank follows the same course in his romantic affairs. He binds Lucy to him without making a commitment to her: "He had not, in truth, asked her to be his wife; but he had told her that he loved her, and could never love any other woman. He had asked for no answer to this assurance, and then he left her" (p. 150).

Frank leaves Lucy to pursue Lizzie. Frank's attitude toward both women suggests an ambivalent regard to proper femininity. Frank realizes that Lizzie is a liar and a thief, but, in truth, he likes her better than he likes Lucy. He considers Lucy

perfect, but perfection is not a likeable quality: "He did not want women to be perfect.... But Lucy Morris, in his eyes, was perfect" (p. 151). Frank, then, can despise both girls--Lizzie for being bad, Lucy for being good. Trollope plays with fictional expectations as Frank self-consciously enacts his roles as lover and hero. Frank understands the convention only too well. He flirts with Lizzie and even considers marrying her while he protects himself from her with the shield of his engagement to Lucy.

Frank admires Lizzie because of her vitality: "What a wonderful woman was his cousin Lizzie;--and so unlike any other girl he had ever seen! How full she was of energy, how courageous, and, then, how beautiful!" (p. 255). Frank's admiration of the criminal woman implies that feminine purity is not really an attraction for men. At the same time, Lizzie's past makes her fair game for flirtation: "...women who have had one husband already, are not like young girls in respect to their hearts. So at least thought Frank Greystock" (p. 255). Frank's cavalier treatment of Lucy emphasizes his hypocrisy. He assigns her a martyr's role during his fling with Lucy: "...but what did all that matter in comparison with the love of Lucy Morris? A man is bound to be true. And he would be true. Only, as a matter of

course, Lucy must wait" (p. 255).

In the spirit of the proper heroine, Lucy does wait. In the process, she experiences a series of humiliating rejections, not only from Frank but from Lady Fawn, her patroness. When Lucy stands by Frank in an argument with Lord Fawn, Lady Fawn supports her son and ships Lucy out as companion to Lizzie's dragon aunt, Lady Linlithgow. Frank eventually returns to Lucy after sating himself on Lizzie's feminine wiles. The narrator moves quickly through the reconciliation and marriage to return to Lizzie's trial for theft: "Having told the tale of Lucy Morris to the end, the chronicler must now go back to the more important persons of this history" (p. 747).

Trollope's hurried conclusion of Lucy's history suggests that her story is predictable and unimportant compared to Lizzie's adventures. Lizzie's trial, rather than Lucy's marriage, is given center stage. Like Lady Mason, Lizzie figures in two trials. She, too, perjures herself in the original trial. In contrast to Lady Mason, however, Lizzie convinces no one of her honesty, but the legal representatives in Lizzie's case understand that dishonesty is a natural part of a self-interested world. Learned counsel Mr. Dove merely recommends that the Eustace family count their losses in their connection with Lizzie. He

suggests that her greed is simply a microcosm of the larger society:

'What can you get by harassing the poor, weak, ignorant creature?... She has hankered after her bauble, and has told falsehoods in her efforts to keep it. Have you never heard of older persons, and more learned persons, and persons nearer to ourselves, who have done the same?' (p. 694).

Mr. Dove excuses Lizzie on the grounds of her femininity, but the narrator makes an important connection between her criminality and that which operates in male-dominated institutions. Lizzie's misappropriation of the diamonds is compared, for example, to kick-backs in high government posts: "At that moment there was presumed to be great rivalry, not unaccompanied by intrigue, among certain leaders of the learned profession with reference to various positions of high honor and emolument, vacant or expected to be vacant" (p. 694). Mr. Dove excuses Lizzie according to the ways of the world. He exercises a problematic mercy that excuses dishonesty and crime. The narrator refuses to admit Mr. Dove as the spokesman of conscience. Mr. Dove may believe that 'the very existence of such property so to be disposed of, or so not to be disposed of, is in itself an evil,' but the narrator reminds us that Mr. Dove takes his fees, too,

"as to which...no human being was more indifferent" (p. 753).

Lady Mason's trial and criminality confound the community and throw its most respected members into moral crisis. In the world of the Palliser novels, Lizzie's notoriety is not only part of every day life but a social asset. Lizzie does not need to shelter her life as Lady Mason does or to put herself through a public trial to right herself in the public mind. Even the supposedly high-minded politicians in the Palliser set take bets on Lizzie's chances to escape prosecution. Lady Glencora solidifies Lizzie's place in the social scheme by visiting her to show public support for the woman who, in society gossip, "was almost becoming a heroine on the strength of the necklace" (p. 582).

Lizzie escapes punishment in the simplest manner: she simply fails to show up for her trial. The trial is a public spectacle: "Lizzie's absence was a great disappointment to the sight-seers of London, but nevertheless the court was crowded" (p. 750). The prosecuting attorney publicly censures Lizzie for her actions, but nevertheless pronounces a kind of encomium as part of his condemnation: "A most wonderful woman, indeed, is the widow Eustace. It is she whom public opinion will convict as the guilty one in this

marvellous mass of conspiracy and intrigue' (pp. 752-53). Public opinion, on the contrary, favors Lizzie, not as the victim of a legal conspiracy, but as the heroine of her own self-created adventure.

Lizzie tests the limits of public opinion as she tests the limits for feminine behavior in a world of compromised values. Lizzie finally marries contrary to her principle that an engagement is protection enough for her independent life. After failed romances with Frank, Lord Fawn, and Lord George, Lizzie marries the slimey charlatan society preacher, Mr. Emilius. Mr. Emilius seems a fitting companion for Lizzie, the spokesman for social hypocrisy: "The man had a grasping ambition about him, and a capacity, too, which, combined, would enable him to preach himself into notoriety" (p. 759).

Mr. Emilius spouts the romantic cant that Lizzie craves. Perceptive enough to recognize his insincerity, Lizzie still enjoys Mr. Emilius' seduction. In the cynical style of Felix Carbury, Lizzie's high society suitors disdain romantic twaddle in their pursuit of Lizzie. She wants Frank and Lord George, for instance, to express romantic sentiments, even if insincerely. Mr. Emilius pleases her in this respect, returning fraud for fraud:

She knew, or half knew, that the man was a

scheming hypocrite, craving her money, and following her in the hour of her troubles, because he might then have the best chance of success. She had no belief whatever in his love. And yet she liked it, and approved his proceeding. She liked lies, thinking them to be more beautiful than truth. To lie readily and cleverly, recklessly and yet successfully, was, according to the lessons which she had learned, a necessity in woman, and an added grace in man (p. 762).

Lies, hypocrisy, and greed are the lessons that Lizzie learns from her society. Lizzie's adventures prove that reckless lies are successful in her world and, for a woman, almost necessary.

Lizzie's marriage to Mr. Emilius marks an important difference from the fates of the anti-heroines in the earlier novels. In the earlier novels, the anti-heroines retreat from relationships and live as exiles in other worlds. Lizzie marries and seems to achieve the union guaranteed to the conventional heroine. Her marriage, however, represents a mock comic ending. Lizzie marries partly out of an awareness that she has challenged public opinion to the breaking point. Mr. Emilius's social status is far below any of Lizzie's other suitors, but being his wife still provides greater social approbation than

living her life as an independent woman. She is no longer able to maintain a bohemian life without violating social codes, however hypocritical they may be: "Lizzie, when the moment came, knowing that her betrothals had been made public to all the world, did not dare to recede from another engagement" (p. 764).

Readers of the Palliser novels know that Mr. Emilius proves a bigamist and a murderer in the subsequent novel, Phineas Redux. The narrator ominously predicts that Mr. Emilius will, indeed, be more than a match for Lizzie:

It may be that Mr. Emilius will suit her as well as any husband that she could find--unless it shall be found that his previous career has been too adventurous. After a certain fashion he will, perhpas, be tender to her; and he will have his own way in everything, and be no whit afraid when she is about to die in an agony of tears before his eyes (p. 764).

Even the debauched Duke of Omnium, the most avid audience for Lizzie's adventures, astutely recognizes Lizzie's fate with a rogue. The Duke's final comments to Lady Glencora bless Lizzie for the entertainment she has provided but predict future misery for her: "I call that woman a perfect God-send. What should we have done without her?... I'm afraid, you know, that

your friend hasn't what I call a good time before her, Glencora' (p. 770).

The Eustace Diamonds marks an important shift in Trollope's social satire. Even in The Way We Live Now, a later novel, the anti-heroines escape the community to start new lives in alternative communities. Lady Mason and Julia Brabazon attempt to gain advantage within the patriarchy while Mrs. Hurtle attempts to challenge the system; all finally are isolated from the community. Lizzie participates fully in her world, both challenging its restrictions and obeying its strictures. She manages to escape social opprobrium, but she actually experiences a more profound isolation as a result of inculcating social values: she becomes isolated from her inner self. In a very modern sense, Trollope suggests that the modern world structures isolation and inner emptiness by its easy acceptance of false values, which prevents self-actualization, particularly for women, who are conditioned to be false as part of their social role.

Comic as much as the novel is, the world-view of The Eustace Diamonds is grim. The narrator may, with understatement, suggest that Lizzie does not have good taste in men, even as she consorts with highly-placed members of society. Who should be better company for her? That she fails to see much distinction between

the priggish Lord Fawn and the opportunistic Lord George may, in fact, testify to her perspicuity rather than her obtuseness.

In The American Senator, Trollope condenses the world of political relationships to elucidate the dilemma further. The anti-heroine of The American Senator follows Lizzie's course of lies to achieve social advantage with grim determination. Arabella Trefoil's adventures most conspicuously illuminate Trollope's disaffection with late Victorian values as he shows the consequences for women in a world that makes women's main function--marriage--a blatant form of prostitution.

The Immoral Hunt:

Arabella Trefoil and the Mercenary Marriage

Contemporary critics of The American Senator (1877) recognized the essential misnomer of the novel's title. Reviewers for the Athenaeum and the Saturday Review both suggested the Senator might well have been deleted from the story; The Times resoundingly condemned the Senator as "an excrescence on the work to which he gives his name."¹ The Spectator's reviewer agreed that the Senator fails as a focus for the novel but suggested he might have been put to greater use in the story since the central marriage plot is "perhaps the least interesting our author has ever written."²

Characteristic of Trollope's novels, The American Senator contains two love stories, that of the conventional heroine Mary Masters and that of Arabella Trefoil, the novel's manhunting anti-heroine. And, characteristically, the anti-heroine's story is the main focus of the story, which perhaps explains, in part, the general dissatisfaction with the novel. In addition, The American Senator extends Trollope's social criticism from the earlier novels, permitting an outsider to assess Victorian England and to pass judgment on the hypocrisy of the age.³

Senator Elias Gotobed freely criticizes English

institutions and the customs of the country while accompanying England's American ambassador on a visit to his home country.⁴ John Morton is facetiously dubbed the "Paragon" of the foreign office. As squire of Dillsborough, he is nothing more than an absentee landlord. Trollope weaves together the larger social theme of bad mastership through his use of the marriage plot. Patriarchal representatives fail in their responsibility to society. Within the smaller construct of Dillsborough society, John Morton neglects his tenantry while taking full advantage of the privileges of his social position:

The estate when he came of age had already had some years to recover itself, and as he went from capital to capital, he was quite content to draw from it an income which enabled him to shine with peculiar brilliance among his brethren. He had visited Bragton once since the old squire's death, and had found the place very dull and uninviting. He had no ambition whatever to be master of the U.R.U.; but did look forward to a time when he might be Minister Plenipotentiary at some foreign court.⁵

Morton chooses to shine among strangers rather than live with the dull and uninviting folk at home. Although he represents his country abroad, he is an

alien in his home county.

John Morton's choice of a bride epitomizes his general alienation from the society he is supposed to represent. He engages himself to an ex-patriot English woman, a woman without a country. Arabella Trefoil is likewise alienated from society, but her alienation stems from an opposite cause. Whereas Morton chooses to ignore the responsibilities of his social position to pursue a foreign career, Arabella pursues her career on foreign ground to establish for herself an appropriate social position. Her career is, as Trollope notes, "to run down a husband."⁶

Arabella's corruption as a woman is the product of her attempts to fulfill her social role--that is, to achieve a woman's success through marriage. Arabella appears successful in America, a country of new identities. In Washington, she is able to fool Morton into believing that her father is a scion of British aristocracy, "as to which John Morton who only understood foreign affairs was not aware, as he would have been had he lived in England, that Lord Augustus was nobody" (p. 52). As "a beauty, and a woman of fashion," Arabella is able to captivate John Morton abroad, where she can exercise her charms "with almost American freedom" (p. 52).

In The Way We Live Now, the American frontier

represents a new possibility of freedom for the novel's anti-heroines. Arabella's American experience is limited to the British political delegation and therefore offers only a recreation of the old society. The charm of created identity loses its freshness in England: Arabella's "copious hair was managed after such a fashion that no one could guess what was her own and what was purchased.... If, as the ladies said, [the brilliance of her complexion] was all paint, she, or her maid, must have been a great artist. It never betrayed itself to be paint" (p. 82). Unmasked, Arabella is "haggard, almost old," with "nothing soft or gracious in the tresses of her hair" (p. 375). In other words, only a fool like John Morton would consider Arabella's glitter to be real gold.

If Arabella fools John Morton, she never fools herself. Unlike any of the anti-heroines examined so far, Arabella offers no exculpating rationale for her participation in the marriage market. As ruthless as Lizzie Eustace, Arabella is more clear-sighted about her place in society: "She had long known that it was her duty to marry, and especially her duty to marry well" (p. 82). Neither the narrator nor Arabella feels obliged to explain the necessity. In Orley Farm, by contrast, Lady Mason contracts a mercenary marriage to relieve her family's financial distress; in The

Claverings, Julia Brabazon marries for money to maintain her family's position. In both of these novels, Trollope works hard to excuse the anti-heroines and to elicit the reader's sympathy for them. By the time he writes The American Senator, however, he expects his reader to recognize and condemn the mercenary marriage as an integral--and corrupt--part of Victorian society.

In this sense, Arabella's complicity in the devaluation of marriage becomes a reflection of the reader's complacency regarding corrupt social values. Arabella becomes an "odious female" only because she is honest about the real value of her quest.⁷ The narrator points out the general hypocrisy of society in contrast to Arabella's harsh honesty:

With worldly people in general, though the worldliness is manifest enough and is taught by plain lessons from parents to children, yet there is generally some thin veil even among themselves, some transparent tissue of lies, which, though they never quite hope to deceive each other, does produce among them something of the comfort of deceit. But between Lady Augustus and her daughter, there had for many years been nothing of the kind. The daughter herself had been too honest for it (p. 82).

The narrator's commentary identifies deceit as the basis for a social structure of general worldliness. The "plain lessons" of the world are actually obscured by complex layers of lies which we all apparently understand but which we assume fool others. Arabella masters the disguises of deceit but acknowledges her own hypocrisy. Like Lucinda Roanoke, Arabella participates in the social aspirations of marriageable women even as she scorns both men and marriage.

Arabella's understanding of the advantages of marriage underscores the emotional isolation of her world. Marriage does not bring love, satisfaction, or pleasure; it does, however, give a woman greater power in society. Arabella and her mother are social vagabonds, moving as unwelcome visitors in others' homes. Arabella seeks marriage as a way to master her circumstances:

She herself did not care much for pleasure. But she did care to be a great lady,--one who could snub others, one who could show real diamonds when others wore paste, one who might be sure to be asked everywhere even by the people who hated her. She rather liked being hated by women and did not want any man to be in love with her,--except as far as might be sufficient for the purpose of marriage (p. 83).

Arabella sees society as her adversary and men as her "enemy" (p. 135). Marriage is her only means to achieve puissance and authority. In Arabella's understanding of social roles, the great lady is the complement to the patriarch; significantly, she is no more bountiful than her husband is patronizing. The great lady has the power to command acceptance and inspire hatred. Power and mastery are the "real diamonds" Arabella covets to replace her false posturing in society.

Arabella is a perfect foil for the American Senator. Arabella and the Senator visit John Morton's home seat together. Both are critical of Morton's position but for different reasons. The Senator wishes to understand a foreign way of life whereas Arabella understands the machinations of society all too well. The Senator outrages Dillsborough by challenging the custom of church patronage, by confusing the various social ranks of the neighborhood personages, and, worst of all, by questioning the morality of fox hunting. Arabella, on the other hand, is conscious of each social distinction and advantage. She ignores the socially unimportant clergy who come to dine at Bragton but maneuvers to achieve a conspicuous place in the local hunt.

The hunt is an important representation of the

organization of society. Arabella insinuates herself into the hunting party to prey on Lord Rufford. With higher social rank and greater wealth, Lord Rufford is better game than John Morton. In her pursuit of the lord, however, Arabella is as much the fox as the huntress. Lord Rufford is first gentleman of the neighborhood, but, like Morton, he is a poor master:

Lord Rufford is a rich man who thinks of nothing but sport in all its various shapes, from pigeon-shooting at Hurlingham to the slaughter of elephants in Africa; and though he is lenient in all his dealings, is not much thought of in the Dillsborough side of the county, except by those who go out with the hounds (pp. 6-7).

Women represent significant sport to Lord Rufford, and Arabella becomes his pigeon as a result of her pursuit. Arabella actually participates in two hunts, one at Rufford Hall, as Lord Rufford's guest, and one at Mistletoe, the home of her aunt, the Duchess of Mayfair. The first hunt allows her the opportunity to attract Lord Rufford's interest and establish the basis for a correspondence filled with compromising sexual innuendo. The series of letters fails to bring Lord Rufford to a proposal, so Arabella arranges the second hunt to force him into a secure attachment. In both cases, Arabella fails in her moral choices. At

Rufford, a hunting accident kills one of the guests. As the fallen rider lies dying in an upstairs bedroom, Arabella encourages Lord Rufford to proceed with a ball in her honor. At Mistletoe, Arabella intentionally compromises her reputation through a sexual liaison with Rufford during a closed carriage ride.

The Senator's question about the morality of the hunt help underscore the hypocrisy behind Arabella's marriage quest. To the members of the local U.R.U., the Senator is an "aggravating, interfering, and most obnoxious American" only because his criticisms are so painfully apt (p. 130). Marvelling at the number of hounds used to track down one fox, the Senator concludes that 'half-a-dozen would do just as well, only for the show' (p. 54). As Arabella plans to hunt down Lord Rufford, she too realizes that "A great deal must depend on appearance" (p. 135). To the high-minded and pragmatic Senator, the Master of the Hounds seems 'an unwholesome sort of profession,' and the entire sport is contrary to 'either utility or rational recreation' (pp. 55, 60). Arabella points out the duplicity inherent in her own chase. She must demean herself to achieve an object she despises: 'What a shame it is that a man like that should have so much and that a girl like me should have nothing at all. I know twice as much as he does, and am twice as clever,

and yet I've got to treat him as though he were a god' (pp. 172-73).

For Arabella, the hunt is more than recreation. Her labor to catch a man represents the hard work society reserves for her as a woman. The expectation that a woman must work to secure a husband exacts a high price. With insight as penetrating as the Senator's, Arabella complains that her position as an unmarried woman consists of unrewarded toil for an unwanted prize: 'I must settle somewhere;--or else die;--or else run away. I can't stand this any longer and I won't. Talk of work,--men's work! What man ever has to work as I do?' (p. 88). Her work is hard to bear because it involves such relentless self-abasement that flight, or even death, seems preferable.

Trollope's discussion of Arabella reveals his awareness of the destructive social conditioning of the marriage market. In a letter to Anna Steele, Trollope anticipates criticism of Arabella's character as he notes the humiliating consequences of marriage expectations for women:

The critics have to come, and they will tell me that [Arabella] is unwomanly, unnatural, turgid,--the creation of a morbid imagination, striving after effect by laboured abominations. But I swear I have known the woman,--not one special

woman, not one Mary Jones or Sarah Smith,--but all the traits, all the cleverness, all the patience, all the courage, all the self-abnegation,--and all the failure.⁸

Trollope recognizes that self-abnegation is central to the woman's desperate quest for marriage. Most poignantly, despite the mortification integral to laboring toward marriage, the woman is a failure after all.

For all her apparent selfishness, Arabella resembles Georgiana Longestaffe in her self-abnegation. The need to be married overwhelms the need for self-actualization. Like Georgiana, Arabella rejects love as an operative value in the world. She tells her mother that caring for a particular suitor is unwarranted affectation: 'As for caring about him, mamma... of course I don't. He is nasty, and odious in every way. But I have got to do the best I can, and what is the use of talking about such trash as that?' (p. 82).

Arabella's laboriously whimsical correspondence with Lord Rufford reveals the affectations she must assume as she conducts her pursuit. Although Lord Rufford encourages her advances, Arabella realizes she must remain within the amorphous boundaries he creates for their flirtation: "She was quite alive to the fact

and as she had adapted herself to Mr. Morton in Washington, so could she at Rufford adapt herself to Lord Rufford" (p. 163). Arabella's identity is structured for her by the patriarchal representatives. To win the man, she must play within the rules established for women by the patriarchal system. Not surprisingly, the rules are ill-defined, tacit, and give the greatest advantage to men.

Arabella's letters represent her attempt to beat the system while playing by the rules. After leaving Rufford Hall, she tries to maintain the improper intimacy Lord Rufford has established during her visit. Although Arabella acknowledges her ploys to herself, she nevertheless plays the deceitful social roles in her relationship with Rufford:

Of course she had against her not only all his friends,--but the man himself also and his own fixed intentions. Lord Rufford was not a marrying man,--which was supposed to signify that he intended to lead a life of pleasure till the necessity of providing an heir should be forced upon him, when he would take to himself a wife out of his own class in life twenty years younger than himself for whom he would not care a straw (p. 210).

The narrator explains for the readers the social codes

Arabella tries to manipulate. The series of letters, however, demonstrates the limitations of the codes for women. The harder Arabella tries, the more she loses ground.

Lord Rufford begins the exchange of letters with openly flirtatious references to their intimacy at Rufford and concludes with a suggestively ambiguous closing remark: 'I never know how to sign myself to young ladies. Suppose I say that I am yours.... Anything you like best, R.' (p. 211). Following his lead, Arabella closes her first letter in kind: 'I have not had much experience in signing myself to young gentlemen and am therefore quite in as great a difficulty as you were; but, though, I can't swear that I am everything that you like best, I will protest that I am pretty nearly what you ought to like,--as far as young ladies go' (p. 213). Of course, the reader knows that Arabella's experience with men is extensive; the narrator tells us that "She had had many lovers, and had been engaged to not a few" (p. 82). Still, she must feign sexual innocence. Lord Rufford, on the other hand, implies that his life includes illicit relationships with many young women. To attract Lord Rufford and still remain within the rules of propriety for women, Arabella simultaneously hints that, innocent as she is, she is erotic enough to offer Lord Rufford

sexual gratification.

Arabella realizes that Rufford's interest in her is purely sexual. Since she has no fortune or social position of consequence, sex is all she has to offer that will interest him. Lord Rufford is ready to exploit a sexual relationship, but he is also able to retreat from a compromising situation because of his own wealth and social position. He can compromise Arabella; if she compromises him, she is an odious, improper female. Although Rufford suggests they meet at Mistletoe for another liaison, he refuses to commit himself to a rendezvous after Arabella arranges an invitation from her uncle the Duke. In each subsequent letter, Lord Rufford draws a protective social shield around his activities to prevent Arabella from snaring him. Concurrently, he continues to maintain the false romance between them.

Arabella's letters become more desperate and less circumspect as Rufford's become more cautious and less engaged. Her painful display of honesty only provides Rufford with greater amusement. She begs him to show up at Mistletoe:

Your last letter which I have just got has killed me. You must know that I have altered my plans and done it at immense trouble for the sake of meeting you at Mistletoe.... Please, please come.

It was to be the little cream of the year for me.... Pray answer this by return of post.... Pray come. Yours if you do come--; what shall I say? Fill it as you please (p. 216).

Although the narrator suggests that Arabella's response is part strategy, the pleading letter is nonetheless excruciating to read. Arabella includes a shrewd reference to the dual purpose behind their meeting: 'I think you are bound to go to Mistletoe though the hunting at Melton should be better than was ever known. When the hunting is good in one place of course it is good in another. Even I am sportsman enough to know that' (p. 216).

For Rufford, the hunting may be just as good at some other estate, but for Arabella, the field is limited. She recognizes that women are fair game for Rufford anywhere, just as she is interchangeable with any other woman who amuses him. Rufford's response continues the conceit of the hunt as the basis for their meeting, but also suggests the essential prostitution behind the marriage hunt. As he ungraciously agrees to meet Arabella at Mistletoe, Rufford refers to their liaison in terms of a pay-off: 'I can only hope that you will be grateful. After all your abuse about my getting back my money I think you ought to be very grateful. I have got it back again,

but I can assure you that has had nothing to do with it' (p. 217). Despite the contemptuous tone of the letter, Arabella is relieved to achieve this amount of condescension: "Arabella felt that a great deal of the compliment was taken away... but still she was grateful and contented" (p. 217).

Arabella is the only woman to participate in the Mistletoe hunt. She defies her aunt's disapproval by riding to hounds with Lord Rufford. Her open pursuit is too abrasive for polite society to sanction. The narrative juxtaposes the elaborate machinations involved in the Mistletoe hunt to its ultimate triviality: "The sport was fairly good. They had twenty minutes in the morning and a kill. Then they drank their sherry. In the big wood they found a fox but could not do anything with him" (p. 267). The hunt requires intricate preparations for a brief twenty minutes of mediocre sport. The violence of the kill is followed by refined sherry-drinking. The hunt represents society's veil of deceit as the participants cover its essential brutality with gentility. Arabella's role in the hunt is simply part of an accepted social custom, a convention laden with ritual but bereft of significance: "The hunting field is by no means a place suited for real love-making" (p. 268).

Lord Rufford actually controls the course of the

hunt, although he pretends to be the unwitting victim of Arabella's manipulation. Rufford arranges to escort Arabella back home in a closed carriage. Arabella welcomes the carriage ride as an opportunity to extract a proposal from Rufford, even if it means ruining her reputation. For all Arabella's guile, she, not Rufford, is the dupe in the power game of sexual politics:

'Lord Rufford, what does this mean?'

'Don't you know what it means?'

'Hardly.'

'It means that I think you the jolliest girl out. I never liked anybody so well as I do you.'

'Perhaps you never liked anybody,' she said.

'Well;--yes, I have; but I am not going to boast of what fortune has done for me in that way. I wonder whether you care for me?'

'Do you want to know?'

'I should like to know. You have never said that you did.'

'Because you have never asked me.'

'Am I not asking you now, Bella?'

'There are different ways of asking,--but there is only one way that will get an answer from me. No;--no. I will not have it. I have allowed too much to you already. Oh, I am so tired.' Then

she sank back almost into his arms,--but recovered herself very quickly. 'Lord Rufford,' she said, 'if you are a man of honour let there be an end of this. I am sure you do not wish to make me wretched.'

'I would do anything to make you happy,'

'Then tell me that you love me honestly, sincerely, with all your heart,--and I shall be happy.'

'You know I do.' (pp. 269-70).

Arabella believes a confession of love and a physical liaison is enough to force Rufford into marriage. Rufford knows the limitations of both. A declaration of love is not a proposal of marriage; a tryst in a carriage does not merit for a man the world's censure. The carriage ride signifies Arabella's utter moral disgrace, but Rufford's comments indicate that "fortune" has provided many such women for his amusement. What is a desperate measure for Arabella is apparently a commonplace for Rufford.

A seduction scene follows this conversation. Arabella's seeming promiscuity is peculiarly asexual. She removes herself, psychologically, from the physical involvement as she considers the social consequences of the affair: "She was conscious but hardly more than conscious that he was kissing her;--and yet her brain

was at work. She felt that he would be startled, repelled, perhaps disgusted were she absolutely to demand more from him now" (p. 270). Arabella risks social ostracism as a promiscuous woman and yet feels unable, as a woman, to demand a commitment from Lord Rufford. Knowing that Rufford is not an honest, sincere man of honor, Arabella rests her hope on the patriarchal codes for honorable conduct from men: "And might it not be that [her uncle] would carry great weight with him;--that the Duke might induce him to utter the fatal word though she, were she to demand it not, might fail?" (p. 270).

The patriarchal chivalry intended to protect women actually shields men. Lord Rufford refuses to face Arabella after the carriage ride, leaving Mistletoe immediately afterward. Arabella has no escape from her actions. She is forced to remain within the domestic circle and experience the scorn of the other guests. The Duke refuses to support Arabella, even at her aunt's request, feigning an inability to invoke the code of nobility his position is meant to embody:

The Duchess before dinner submitted herself and all her troubles at great length to the Duke, but the Duke could give her no substantial comfort. Of course it had all been wrong.... But what could he do? If the marriage came off it would be all

well. If not, this niece must not be invited to Mistletoe again. As to speaking to Lord Rufford, he did not quite see how he was to set about it (p. 276).

The Duke's attitude marks the progression of social corruption in an increasingly sophisticated world. In Orley Farm, for instance, Sir Peregrine Orme's chivalry is sincere if out-moded. In The Small House at Allington (1862), when Lily Dale is jilted by her fiance, Johnny Eames becomes her champion to exact public punishment of Mr. Crosbie. But the pastoral idyll of the earlier Barsetshire novels does not exist in Arabella's world. Here, the patriarchal figures openly assert the supremacy of their power by ignoring ignoble actions.

The Duke is not concerned with upholding high moral principles but with preserving corrupt social forms. Arabella will be socially accepted only if Lord Rufford legitimizes her position through marriage. Otherwise, she is banished from the family seat. Trollope stringently criticizes the implicit prostitution behind mercenary quests for marriage. At the same time, he demonstrates the degradation and desperation the marriage market involves for women. When the Duke and her father fail to bring breach of promise charges against Lord Rufford, Arabella's mother

intercedes to receive payment for damages. In essence, Lady Augustus acts as a pimp for her daughter.

Although Arabella is willing to trade sexual favors for a marriage proposal, she reacts against the utter indignity of accepting, outright, cash for sex: 'I am to understand then you have sold me,--sold all my hopes and my very name and character, for 8,000 pounds!' (p. 432). Lady Augustus articulates the real reason for marriage as well as the complete disgrace Arabella experiences as a result of trying to marry:

'Is it not a good escape from so great a trouble? Think what 8,000 pounds will do. It will enable you to live in comfort wherever you may please to go.... Your name and character will not be touched, my dear. As for his marrying you I soon found that that was absolutely out of the question' (p. 432).

The Rufford plot is an important device to shift our sympathies toward Arabella. Originally the victimizer, she becomes the victim. Further, her exploits with the lord prompt her to make moral restitution to her fiancé as she comes to important conclusions about love and marriage. John Morton falls ill after Arabella deserts him to pursue Lord Rufford. After Rufford's cruel treatment of her, Arabella visits Morton on his deathbed to apologize for her own

treatment of him. She realizes the truth of Morton's sense of honor when compared to the faithlessness of Lord Rufford and all her previous lovers. She realizes that Morton's uncompromising sternness makes him more reliable as a potential husband, although, as a man, he remains distasteful to her:

She had found that the man's ways were in no wise like her ways,--and she had found also that were she to become his wife, he certainly would not change. She had looked about for a means of escape,--but as she did so she had recognized the man's truth. No doubt he had been different from the others, less gay in his attire, less jocund in his words, less given to flattery and sport and gems and all the little wickednesses which she had loved. But they,--those others had, one and all, struggled to escape from her (p. 373).

John Morton's death prepares the way for both Arabella's future and for the future of the novel's conventional heroine, Mary Masters. Mary nurses an unspoken and apparently unrequited love for Reginald Morton, John's cousin. Like his cousin, Reginald is a poor master, reticent and phlegmatic in his interaction with Dillsborough society. Although he is fond of Mary, he despises her social position as the daughter of the Morton family attorney. Worse still,

Mary's stepmother is the daughter of an ironmonger. Reginald also despises Mary for attracting the suit of Dillsborough's most prosperous farmer, Larry Twentyman, an unabashed tuft-hunter. Reginald's general misanthropy condemns Mary, although she tries hard to discourage Larry's courtship:

It was grievous to him that he should have gone out of his way to ask her to walk with him just at the moment when she was expecting this vulgar lover,--for that she had expected him he felt no doubt. Yet he had heard her disclaim any intention of walking with the man! But girls are sly, especially when their lovers are concerned. It made him sore at heart to feel that this girl should be sly, and doubly sore to think that she should have been able to love such a one as Lawrence Twentyman (p. 37).

The narrator implies that Reginald's hostility toward Mary is a product of unrecognized love: "He assured himself that he was not in love with her himself, and that he had no idea of falling in love with her" (p. 37). The narrator does not excuse Reginald's reserve but rather criticizes the judgmental quality of his love: "In all this he was most unjust..." (p. 38).

Mary's story follows the pattern of the

conventional heroine but with important alterations. She endures her stepmother's persecution when she rejects Larry's proposal while she endures Reginald's contempt for attracting Larry in the first place. In terms of passive endurance, Mary fulfills the requirements of the heroine in love. However, Mary's love problems involve many of the complications which are part of Arabella's marriage quest. For example, Mary is encouraged to marry for money and is well-aware of the social differences which distinguish her two lovers. Mrs. Masters echoes Arabella in her estimation of the essential element for marital satisfaction--that is, a comfortable income is more important than affection or personal esteem. When Mary, like Arabella, expresses an inability to care for her suitor, Mrs. Masters responds with the harsh words of necessity that Arabella supplies for herself: 'Mary, that is wicked. When your papa has so many things to think of and so much to provide for, you should be more thoughtful of him.... Can't help it! Did anybody ever see such an idiot since girls were first created?... You must help it' (pp. 225-26).

Mary herself is attracted to Reginald because of his association with her when she filled the role as companion to his aunt, Lady Ushant. Mary knows the difference between genteel life and life on the farm.

Like Arabella, Mary exists between clearly defined lines of social caste. More a lady than a farmer's wife, her family is still not equivalent to that of the Morton squires. To Mary's chagrin, even Lady Ushant believes she would do well to marry Larry. During John Morton's illness, Reginald prepares to become squire of Morton and consequently becomes more remote from Mary as a potential lover: "He was now more beyond her reach than ever,--more utterly removed from her. He would probably become Squire of Bragton, and she, in her earliest days, had heard the Squire spoken of as though he were one of the potentates of the earth" (p. 369).

Mary's repressed hope for Reginald's affection undergoes the self-immolation required for the heroine. She admits his social superiority, although it places her in an unfavorable position. Mary accedes to conventional social distinctions but nevertheless resents their affect on her feelings of self-worth:

There was something in his manner to her almost protective, almost fatherly,--as though he had some authority over her.... In every tone of his voice she felt that she heard an expression of interest in her welfare,--but it was the interest which a grownup person takes in a child, or a superior in an inferior. Of course he was her superior, but yet the tone of his voice was

distasteful to her (pp. 369-70)

Reginald's elevation to squire corresponds to Mary's fall in self-esteem. Ironically, Mary provides the community integration which Reginald needs to become an active member of Dillsborough society. Her social position is a cross-section of society: her father is a professional man, her stepmother is a merchant's daughter, she has old connections with the landed Morton family.

Mary's eventual marriage into the Morton family presents several problematic issues. Reginald resists his new role as the leading member of the community. He is as much a shadow figure as his cousin before him; he dislikes hunting, church-going, and dining out, Dillsborough's main social activities. Most important, Reginald resists marriage as necessary for self-fulfillment or for his rise in social position. In essence, he temporizes about any human interaction: "he would take up his residence as squire of Bragton as soon as he married a wife,--should he ever do so" (p. 486). Even as he comes to admit his love for Mary, Reginald continues to qualify the state of his affection: "If he loved any one it was her. If he had ever known a woman with whom he thought it would be pleasant to share the joy and labours of life, it was Mary Masters. If he could imagine that any one

constant companion would be a joy to him, she would be that person" (p. 487).

Reginald's proposal is especially patronizing, and once he assumes a patriarchal role, he claims complete mastery: 'I will be your true husband for the rest of the journey;--by which I mean it to be understood that I take you into patnership on equal terms, but that I am to be allowed to manage the business just as I please' (p. 495). Mary must submit to Reginald's tutelage, although his experience as an active participant in society is limited. Although she has lived with Lady Ushant in the Morton family home, she assumes an inability to accept the rank she has closely observed as a lady's companion: '...I shall know so little about anything.... You ought,--you ought to have chosen some lady of high standing...' (pp. 495-96). Mary affects the role of the grateful but incompetent bride. Fortunately, though, Dillsborough has no lady of higher rank to compete with her for Reginald's hand.

The death of Arabella's fiance allows Mary to exchange places with the anti-heroine and become the first lady of Dillsborough society. The social position which Arabella loses is not lost on Mary's family. Mrs. Masters is delighted that Mary wins the richest man in the neighborhood: "The girl had been

made fit to be the companion of such a one as Reginald Morton, and had now fallen into the position which was suited to her" (p. 499). As in The Claverings, the heroine achieves an exalted station through marriage. However, in The American Senator, Reginald's position is part of his attraction whereas, in The Claverings, the Burton family's scorn for Harry's idleness closes the novel. The shift in attitude suggests that mercenary or social considerations influence even a "good" heroine's perspective on marriage.⁹

Arabella's story deviates from Trollope's own earlier alterations in the plots involving lady criminals. The anti-heroines who precede Arabella commit legal crimes--theft, forgery, perjury, for instance. Arabella's crimes are moral rather than legal. Unlike her predecessors, Arabella actually marries and reestablishes herself in society to a limited degree. However, her marriage, like Mary's, is filled with ambiguities and likewise suggests that mercenary considerations operate even among partners who achieve mutual confidence and understanding.

Arabella's marriage is preceded by two important events. First, despite her faithlessness, she is left a legacy from John Morton. The five thousand pounds gives Arabella the means to reestablish herself in polite society. The legacy is blood money, in a way,

but it gives Arabella limited economic independence, thereby granting her a greater degree of autonomy and power. Although her reputation is compromised enough to make her a topic of sport for the foreign office men-about-town, the legacy still makes her attractive game for socially adventurous fortune-hunters. Second, Arabella responds to her financial gain and loss of reputation by stalking down Lord Rufford, forcing a confrontation on his home ground. The scene entails both humiliation and great courage on Arabella's part. With John Morton's legacy behind her, Arabella can reject Lord Rufford's attempt to buy her off with righteous indignation.

The legacy, coupled with her relations with Lord Rufford, presents a problematic issue only if we expect a moral rejuvenation to result from Arabella's experience in society. On the strength of John Morton's money, Arabella marries Mounser Green, Morton's replacement in the foreign office. Lord Rufford, a scamp till the end, sends her a valuable diamond ring as a wedding gift. In consultation with her fiance, she decides to keep the ring. Together, they conclude that Lord Rufford owes her the price of heartache and silence: "He had certainly behaved very badly to her, but she was quite sure that he would never tell the story of the ring to any one. Perhaps

she thought that as she had spared him in the great matter of the eight thousand pounds, she was entitled to take this smaller contribution" (p. 532).

Mounser Green's complicity in Arabella's checkered past is positive in the sense that their relationship is open and honest; she hides nothing from him, and they comfortably scheme together for their future. In many respects, Arabella's marriage seems more an equal partnership than that which Reginald Morton promises Mary. The narrator describes Arabella's relationship with Green as being based on good terms of friendship. Further, a marriage to Green provides her with the possibility of a more satisfying career as the wife of the Patagonian ambassador: "Among Patagonian women she would probably be the first. Among English ladies it did not seem that at present she had prospect of a high place" (p. 524).

Obviously, though, Arabella's marriage merely reinforces the corrupt values the novel exposes and criticizes. Arabella's own husband conspires to promote a form of prostitution by advising her to accept Lord Rufford's ring. The marriage also represents Arabella's public acceptance into polite society only when she agrees to leave England. By sending a letter to her uncle, dictated by her fiancé, Arabella persuades her family to allow her to be

married from Mistletoe. They agree only because the marriage will rid them of a troublesome member of their clan. Green accepts the Patagonian position as a way to escape public disapprobation for marrying a compromised woman for mercenary reasons. Marriage is a relief to Arabella: "She need never again seem gay in order that men might be attracted" (p. 535). At the same time, Green advises her that marriage and Patagonia represent an end to enjoyment: "he preached her a sermon, expressing a hope as he went on, that as she was leaving the pleasures of life behind her, she would learn to like the work of life" (p. 535). Arabella no longer works to win a husband; now she will work for her husband.

In many ways, Arabella is the most "successful" of Trollope's anti-heroine in that she achieves marriage rather than isolation and position rather than total exile. But, as Trollope's discussion of the novel indicates, Arabella's success is also her failure. She fulfills her social role by marrying. She redeems a place in society through marriage. The process that leads toward marriage, however, marks her as an immoral woman. Everyone becomes corrupt as a result of the general social hunt, so that even the highest representatives of the patriarchy become tainted with the tacit acceptance of marriage as a form of

prostitution.

Senator Gotobed's lecture to high society helps close the novel. Appropriately, his main topic is "the absurdity and illegality of British hunting" (p. 546). Trollope's contemporaries may be right in viewing the American Senator as superfluous to the novel. But the Senator provides Trollope with an essential strategic device to denounce the excrescences of the age. As Trollope remarks, the Senator "is not himself so absurd as the things which he criticizes."¹⁰

That the Senator considers the hunt illegal reinforces the general pattern of Trollope's texts involving anti-heroines. The marriage hunt, of course, is not illegal, but it is a destructive custom that devalues the individual. As women try to fulfill the expectations of society through the mercenary marriage, they become moral criminals. Arabella prostitutes herself in her efforts to capture a rich husband, but she is not very different from her counterpart, the conventional heroine, or from the men who represent the patriarchal system she tries to manipulate.

The Lady as Criminal

The fifteen years between Orley Farm and The American Senator mark a development in Trollope's growing criticism of the values of his age. The patriarchal traditions are repeatedly called into question, particularly the traditions surrounding marriage. "The Woman Question" remained unanswered throughout the Victorian period, helping to perpetuate dichotomous images of women in the literature.¹ Later Victorian writers, such as Gissing and Hardy, explore the difficulties of revising these images, but Trollope's fiction complicates the dichotomy by subverting expectations for both the conventional heroine and villainness.

Trollope's anti-heroines possess many of the qualities of the conventional heroine even as their actions resemble the rebellion characteristic of the Victorian sensation heroine. The anti-heroines are charming and beautiful and are able to assume a lady-like docility to disguise their inner rebellion against social restrictions and hypocrisies which limit their opportunities as women. Diverging from both the conventional and the sensational heroines, however, the anti-heroines actually do not rebel against social values but attempt to infiltrate the patriarchal

structure to participate fully in society. Their efforts to marry well, gain wealth, and assume powerful positions in the world are coincident with the ambitions of their male counterparts. Refusing to endure in silence, they act for themselves with calculation and circumspection and achieve a measure of worldly success. Their moral failures come from their attempts to conform to, rather than rebel against, the larger social values.

Although the anti-heroines of Trollope's earlier novels commit legal crimes, they escape legal penalty by reconciling with the patriarchy, and they do so without compromising their personal senses of honor as women. In these novels, Trollope works to gain the reader's sympathy for the criminal women by showing the extenuating circumstances which compel them to crime and by stressing their efforts to make restitution. After their subversive attempts to gain property, for example, Lady Mason and Lady Ongar both return the misappropriated estates and accept exile, not as a punishment, but as an opportunity to establish a better life outside of Victorian society.

The later anti-heroines, particularly Lady Eustace and Arabella Trefoil, learn to manipulate the patriarchy enough to remain, at least peripherally, within their societies. In contrast to the earlier

anti-heroines, however, they lose not only their senses of honor but also their senses of self. Unlike her earlier counterparts, Lady Eustace refuses to restore the Eustace family heirloom, asserting her right to retain her husband's property. Ironically, Lizzie is embraced by society because of the notoriety she achieves from the theft. Nevertheless, Lizzie's story ends more ominously than either that of Lady Mason or Lady Mason. The wealth she acquires from the Eustace estate also makes her the target of fortune-hunters as unscrupulous as she is. Marrying Mr. Emilius does not insure her social position but rather augurs personal restraint, loss of property, and, possibly, abuse.

The development of the anti-heroine is indicative of Trollope's development as a social critic. As the novels progress, the anti-heroines become increasingly absorbed by social values. They commit "crimes" in order to conform to society's expectations for them as women. The anti-heroines of the later novels are, perhaps, not sympathetic as characters, but their stories are poignant examples of how social conditioning helps shape their criminality. Whereas Lady Mason commits the sensational crimes of forgery and theft, Arabella Trefoil merely seeks marriage to attain a respectable place within her community. Arabella's ruthless manhunt seems reprehensible only

because she is honest about the real purpose behind her efforts to marry: to secure position and maintenance.

Arabella's story most stridently portrays the mercenary marriage as a social crime which harms women. In The Claverings, Trollope offers exculpation for Julia's mercenary marriage. By marrying a rich lord, she helps her family's position at the cost of her own happiness. In The American Senator, Arabella is disenfranchised from her family as well as from society as a whole. Marriage is her only means to gain social acceptance, yet her machinations to gain a husband propel her into virtual prostitution. Most disturbingly, though, her family condones her moral fall as long as it helps her to marry.

With his focus on the hypocrisies of Victorian marriage customs and the failure of family life for women, Trollope's fiction closely resembles the sensation novels of the period. Sensation fiction also focussed on women's stories and portrayed women as criminals rebelling against their traditional roles in society and the family. The main difference between Trollope and the sensation writers is that his anti-heroines do not rebel so obviously or with such violent result.

Curiously, though, sensation fiction affirmed traditional values even as it attacked the family

structure. Women writers of sensation fiction devised the most violent plots against the family, but their heroines are punished severely for their rebellion. In both Lady Audley's Secret (1862) and East Lynne (1895), for example, the sensation heroines have legitimate reasons for rejecting the family structure, yet they suffer appalling consequences as a result. With few alternatives beyond family life, the heroines ultimately return to the family under false identities and false premises.

In Lady Audley's Secret, Helen Talboys is deserted by her husband. To support herself, she assumes a new identity as a governess. As Lucy Graham, she becomes Lady Audley, but George Talboys returns to threaten her prosperity as the wife of a wealthy baronet. He also threatens her with physical abuse. During their struggle, she pushes him down a well. Miraculously, he lives but keeps his survival a secret, causing her to commit more crimes to conceal the "murder."

On the brink of exposure, Lady Audley is asked to choose between prison and the madhouse. Declaring herself insane is her only means of defense. Lady Audley must admit to being either a criminal or a madwoman for trying to restructure her life. She not only experiences society's condemnation but is forced to condemn herself as well. Through the voice of the

male doctor who commits her to his asylum, Braddon draws a relationship between the madhouse, the home, and death:

'From the moment in which Lady Audley enters that house...her life, so far as life is made up of action and variety, will be finished. Whatever secrets she may have will be secrets forever! Whatever crimes she may have committed she will be able to commit no more. If you were to dig a grave for her in the nearest churchyard and bury her alive in it, you could not more safely shut her from the world and all worldly associations. But as a physiologist and as an honest man, I believe you could do no better service to society than by doing this....'²

The "honest" man believes that society must be protected against the active woman, that a woman's life should remain secret, in fact that the subversive woman is better off dead. The asylum offered her is actually her grave. Shut out from life, Lady Audley dies in the asylum of an undefined maladie de langueur (p. 286).

In East Lynne, too, a disaffection with family life leads Lady Isabel to rebel against prescribed social roles. Actually, Isabel is denied even her accepted roles of wife, mother, and mistress of the house. Her husband considers her too ornamental to run

the home competently. Like Lady Audley, Isabel develops an unidentifiable malady; her husband's response to her illness is to isolate her further by leaving her alone for a rest cure. She, too, is essentially deserted by her husband. After Mr. Carlyle repeatedly ignores her pleas for attention and affection, she runs away with a cad.

The subtext of East Lynne is particularly disturbing. Isabel's displacement from her family propels her into a relentless series of humiliating experiences. She endures the desertion of her lover, the death of her illegitimate child, and finally disfigurement in a train crash. Left for dead and losing her identity, she returns, with a new name and face, to the newly-married Mr. Carlyle, acting as governess to her own children. Lady Isabel expresses anger at her lot, but Mrs. Wood ultimately counsels patience and endurance--the traits of the conventional heroine--as Isabel's means to salvation:

The cross had been too heavy, and she was sinking under its weight. Can you wonder at it? It might have been different had she yielded to its weight; striven to bear it in patience and in silence, after the manner she had carved out for herself. But she could not do so. She rebelled against it and it was costing her her life.³

Isabel also dies of "no decided disorder" (p. 446), her real crime being rebellion against the husband who banishes her from her place in the family.

Questions of identity are not limited to sensation fiction but figure largely in much Victorian literature. The twin, the double, the orphan are all motifs that run throughout nineteenth century fiction. Trollope's anti-heroines suffer the loss of identity experienced by their sister sensation heroines. Their crimes become less sensational and more difficult to define, but their efforts to conform to social values have a destructive effect on the women as individuals. Whereas Trollope shows the inner isolation that results from the women's efforts to assume false identities, sensation novelists take this general theme and distort it to incredible lengths.

Sensation heroines nearly always have more than one identity. Lady Audley, for instance, is also Helen Maldon, Helen Talboys, Lucy Graham, and Madame Taylor. In Wilkie Collins' Armadale (1866), Lydia Gwilt changes names whenever expedient. An illegitimate child, she has no real identity: "Whose child was she? A very sensible question. Sorry to inform you that nobody can answer it--Miss Gwilt herself included."⁴ In The Woman in White, Laura Fairley is both angel of the house and madwoman. A victim of mistaken identity, she

is confined to a madhouse, given a false name, and, as a result of her harrowing experiences, she actually becomes mentally incompetent. Without a recognized place in society, the sensation heroine is without a genuine sense of self. She is denied the identity, and the right to a husband's name, that should be guaranteed her by the family.

Like sensation heroines, Trollope's anti-heroines find that marriage does not guarantee a fully realized self. The widows--Lady Mason, Julia Brabazon, and Mrs. Hurtle--seem to be promised brighter futures than the brides. Lizzie Eustace and Arabella Trefoil, especially, are most false to themselves during their efforts to marry. Even with their strong personalities, Lizzie and Arabella are such creatures of social conditioning that they are unable to establish true senses of themselves apart from their social roles. Society enjoys and encourages the many roles that Lizzie plays, which thereby prevents her from establishing a true identity. Arabella, too, changes identity for each potential husband in her effort to achieve the one undisputed role allowed to women--to be a wife.

Trollope's darkening vision precedes Hardy's late-Victorian fatalism. Hardy, too, continually explores the destructive effects of love and marriage

as practiced in Victorian society. In Tess of the D'Urbervilles, particularly, Hardy questions society's assumptions about marriage. Tess's suffering as a woman is the result of her attempt to find happiness through marriage to men of greater wealth and social position. Like Trollope, Hardy shows that marriage may not bestow identity on the heroine but may, instead, destroy her.

Tess lacks a firm identity and, like the sensation heroine, experiences a series of name changes which force her to confront not only her self but her place in society. As Tess Durbeyfield, she is a peasant and a child of nature. As Tess D'Urberville, she is an aristocrat and a fraud. The polarities of the two roles bar Tess from finding a comfortable place in any community. As a result of her spurious "marriage" to Alec D'Urberville, she becomes a fallen woman. Tess believes that her legitimate marriage to Angel Clare will elevate her to middle-class gentility, but instead she becomes a forsaken wife.

Actually, as both a wife and a fallen woman, Tess's lot in life is the same. Her past with Alec and her marriage to Angel both displace her from the community. She feels she is unworthy to associate with either men or women of any class. For instance, her experiences make her an unfit companion for the other

dairy maids for antithetical reasons. By conventional standards, she is both their moral inferior, as a fallen woman, and their social superior, as a wife to a parson's son. Tess's sister milkmaid articulates for Tess the injustice and the paradox of her fate as a woman: 'But you be a gentleman's wife; and it seems hardly fair that you should live like this!'⁵

Marian grasps the inconsistencies inherent in the promises society makes to women. Marriage to a gentleman does not bring Tess happiness but only subjects her to greater abuse and rejection. Tess murders Alec in an act of rebellion, but she fails to see that Angel, as her husband, has victimized her as well. Angel's conventionality structures his response to Tess. He can see her only as a pure maiden or a fallen woman. Further, he considers her a criminal for being raped.

Like Trollope, Hardy shows the appalling irony of the woman's "crime." Tess's original passivity with Alec makes her a victim but, to Angel, it also makes her a whore. Her final act of aggression, however, makes her a criminal. Tess' desperate measure to reject victimization is more threatening to the community than the violence perpetrated against her. Society's condemnation of women's sexuality is so powerful that Tess not only accepts society's

punishment for the murder but also assumes culpability for the rape.

The cult of Victorian womanhood fails the individual woman and fails society by creating an impossible recipe for women to follow. The mixed roles convict women as being either victims or criminals and, most disturbingly, lead women to condemn themselves. Hardy's fatalism reflects the despair of the sensation writers. The limited roles allowed to women ultimately condemn them to death.

Although Trollope's anti-heroines experience the abuse and duplicity of the Victorian marriage, they are nevertheless allowed to recover and seek new lives as independent women. They may not achieve the conventional happy endings promised to women by marriage, but they do survive to test new possibilities for their lives. As he offers hope for the future, Trollope is characteristically Victorian even as he expresses much of the disillusionment present in modern fiction. As exiles from the community or as exiles from the self, the anti-heroines experience the inner isolation which distinguishes the modern protagonist. Trollope's astute valuation of the effects of the marriage market on women anticipates the work of early Modernists like Edith Wharton and Ellen Glasgow.

If Trollope only wrote for his day and moment, he

nevertheless anticipated the concerns of his literary posterity. Perhaps his ability to appreciate, completely, the usual workings of his society is exactly what helps Trollope's fiction remain interesting and topical for contemporary readers of his art. Trollope may not provide an answer to the Woman Question of the nineteenth century, but he vividly describes the social issues which surround the lives of Victorian women. As he grows more sophisticated as a novelist, however, he becomes more difficult to define. He is, as a novelist, as hard to pin down as the common reality he sought to portray--and, perhaps, portrayed all the more effectively by resisting the social and fictional Victorian conventions that so rigorously defined the role of women--in life and in literature.

Notes, Chapter One

- 1 Henry James, Partial Portraits (London: MacMillan, 1911), pp. 100-101.
- 2 James R. Kincaid, The Novels of Anthony Trollope (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1977), p.11.
- 3 Kincaid, p. 7.
- 4 Raymond Williams, The Country and the City (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1973), p. 175.
- 5 Michael Sadlier, Trollope: A Commentary (London: Constable and Co. Ltd., 1927), p. 146.
- 6 James, p. 106.
- 7 Sadlier, p. 146; James, p. 121.
- 8 James, p. 132.
- 9 Robert M. Polhemus, The Changing World of Anthony Trollope (Berkeley: Univ. of California Press, 1968), p.2.
- 10 J. Hillis Miller, The Form of Victorian Fiction (South Bend: Univ. of Notre Dame Press, 1968), p. 35.
- 11 "Sympathy" is a powerful concept that pervades Victorian fiction. Charlotte Bronte gives sympathy an almost supernatural quality; Eliot suggests that a sympathetic nature creates heroism. Trollope uses sympathy in a more every-day sense, a general head-shaking at the mishaps of the ordinary individual.
- 12 Anthony Trollope, An Autobiography (Berkeley: Univ. of California Press, 1947), p. 189.
- 13 Autobiography, p. 191.
- 14 Autobiography, p. 191.
- 15 Anthony Trollope, The Eustace Diamonds (Middlesex: Penguin, 1973). p. 357.
- 16 Anthony Trollope, The Claverings (New York: Dover, 1977), p. 239.

- 17 Kincaid, p. 5.
- 18 Deborah Denenholz Morse, Women in Trollope's Palliser Novels (Ann Arbor: UMI Research Press, 1987), p. 2.
- 19 David Aitken, "Anthony Trollope on 'The Genius Girl,'" Nineteenth Century Fiction, 28, pp. 420-421.
- 20 John Glavin, "Trollope's 'Most Natural English Girl,'" Nineteenth Century Fiction, 28, p. 483. Glavin's essay on Framley Parsonage proposes that the sexuality of the heroine, Lucy Robarts, is "the loss of maiden identity in marriage [which] suggests a kind of ritual sacrifice out of which new life is produced."
- 21 Polhemus, pp. 3, 8.
- 22 Merryn Williams, Women in the English Novel, 1800-1900 (London: MacMillan, 1984), pp. 3-35.
- 23 Patricia Stubbs, Women and Fiction: Feminism and the Novel, 1880-1920 (Sussex: Harvester Press, 1979), p. 7.
- 24 Patricia Branc, Silent Sisterhood: Middle Class Women in the Victorian Home (Pittsburgh: Carnegie-Mellon Press, 1975).
- 25 Phyllis Rose, Parallel Lives (New York: Vintage Books, 1983), p. 68.
- 26 Nina Auerbach, "The Rise of the Fallen Woman," Nineteenth Century Fiction, 35 (June, 1980): 48, p. 38.
- 27 Auerbach, p. 49.
- 28 Mary S. Hartman, Victorian Murderesses: A True History of Thirteen Respectable French and English Women Accused of Unspeakable Crimes (New York: Schocken Books, 1977).
- 29 Elaine Showalter, "Family Secrets and Domestic Subversion: Rebellion in the Novels of the 1860s" in The Victorian Family: Structure and Stresses, ed. Anthony S. Wohl (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1978), p. 101.
- 30 Showalter, p. 112.

- 31 Winifred Hughes, The Maniac in the Cellar: Sensation Novels of the 1860s (Princeton: Princeton Univ. Press, 1980), p. 27.
- 32 Hughes, p. 44.
- 33 Elizabeth K. Helsinger, Robin Lauterbach Sheets, and William Veeder, The Woman Question: Literary Issues, 1837-1883 (New York: Garland Publishing, Inc., 1983), p. 105.
- 34 See Polhemus, pp. 110-121. A frank treatment of sexuality in Trollope is both refreshing and necessary, although Polhemus veers toward imposing twentieth century sexual psychosis on Victorian love rituals.

Notes, Chapter Two

- 1 Anthony Trollope, Orley Farm (New York: Dover, 1981), p. 10. All references to Orley Farm are from this edition and will be cited parenthetically.
- 2 Laura Hapke, "The Lady as Criminal: Contradiction and Resolution in Trollope's Orley Farm," Victorian Newsletter, 1984: 66, p. 18.
- 3 Hapke, p. 21.
- 4 Elaine Showalter, "Family Secrets and Domestic Subversion: Rebellion in the Novels of the 1880s" in The Victorian Family: Structures and Stresses, ed. Anthony S. Wohl (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1978), pp. 102-104.
- 5 Anthony Trollope, An Autobiography, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1947), p. 214.
- 6 Showalter, pp. 104, 113.
- 7 Margaret F. King, "Trollope's Orley Farm: Chivalry versus Commercialism," Essays in Literature, 3: 181-93, 1976-77.
- 8 Ruth apRoberts, The Moral Trollope (Athens: Ohio University Press, 1971).
- 9 Mary S. Hartman, Victorian Murderesses: A True History of Thirteen Respectable French and English Women Accused of Unspeakable Crimes (New York: Schocker Books, 1977).
- 10 Winifred Hughes, The Maniac in the Cellar: Sensation Novels of the 1860s (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1980), p. 44.

Notes, Chapter Three

- 1 Anthony Trollope, The Claverings (New York: Dover, 1977), p. 3. All references to The Claverings are from this edition and will be cited parenthetically.
- 2 Anthony Trollope, An Autobiography (Berkeley: University of Southern California Press, 1947), pp. 164-65.
- 3 Elaine Showalter, "Desperate Remedies: Sensation Novels of the 1860s," Victorian Newsletter, 49, 1976, p. 2.
- 4 Showalter, p. 2.
- 5 Patricia Stubbs, Women and Fiction: Feminism and the Novel, 1880-1920 (Sussex: Harvester Press, 1979), pp. 3, 5.
- 6 Stubbs, p. 3.
- 7 Trollope makes a similar assertion about the realities of domestic roles in The Belton Estate (1865): "The theory of man and wife--that special theory in accordance with which the wife is to bend herself in loving submission before her husband, is very beautiful; and would be good altogether if it could only be arranged that the husband should be the stronger and the greater of the two. The theory is based upon the hypothesis;--and the hypothesis sometimes fails of confirmation. In ordinary marriages the vessel rights itself, and the stronger and the greater takes the lead, whether clothed in petticoats, or in coat, waistcoat, and trousers," The Belton Estate (New York: Dover, 1985, p. 121). Of course Trollope's best-known examples of marital role reversals are the Bishop and Mrs. Proudie in the Barsetshire series.

Notes, Chapter Four

- 1 Elaine Showalter, "Desperate Remedies: Sensation Novels of the 1860s," Victorian Newsletter, 49, 1979, p.4.
- 2 Anthony Trollope, The Way We Live Now (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1982), p. 2. All references to WWLN are from this edition and will be cited parenthetically.
- 3 Showalter, p. 2.
- 4 Elaine Showalter, "Family Secrets and Domestic Subversion: Rebellion in the Novels of the 1860s" in The Victorian Family: Structures and Stresses, ed. Anthony S. Wohl (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1978), p. 101.
- 5 The Letters of Anthony Trollope, ed. John N. Hall (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1983), v. 2, p. 660.
- 6 Letters, v. 2, p. 631.
- 7 Letters, v. 2, p. 660.
- 8 Showalter, "Desperate Remedies," p. 4. Showalter lists flight, adultery, divorce, and murder as typical experiences of Victorian sensation heroines.
- 9 R.D. McMaster, "Women in The Way We Live Now," English Studies in Canada, 7(1), 1981, p. 69.
- 10 For an insightful discussion of the antithetical ideals for Victorian domestic life in Trollope, see Christopher Herbert's "He Knew He Was Right, Mrs. Lynn Linton, and the Duplicities of Victorian Marriage," Texas Studies in Language and Literature, 25(3), 1983, pp. 448-469.
- 11 McMaster, p. 69.

Notes, Chapter Five

- 1 Anthony Trollope, The Eustace Diamonds (Middlesex: Penguin, 1973), p. 39. All references to The Eustace Diamonds are from this edition and will be cited parenthetically.
- 2 Juliet McMaster, Trollope's Palliser Novels: Theme and Pattern (New York: Oxford University Press, 1978), p. 79.
- 3 Elizabeth K. Helsinger, Robin Lauterbach Sheets, William Veeder, The Woman Question: Literary Issues, 1837-1883 (New York: Garland Publishing, Inc., 1983), p. 159. This assessment of Trollope is by a contemporary reviewer, Alfred Austin, writing for Temple Bar in 1869.
- 4 Helsinger, p. 12.
- 5 Rene Girard discusses the relationship between desire, object, and hatred in Deceit, Desire, and the Novel: Self and Others in Literary Structure (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1965).

Notes, Chapter Six

- 1 Anthony Trollope, Letters, v. 2, edited John N. Hall
 (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1983), p. 731.
- 2 Trollope, Letters, v. 2, p. 731.
- 3 In its review of the novel, the Examiner complain that
 "Mr. Trollope has not yet recovered from the attack of
 misanthropy from which he was suffering when he wrote
 The Way We Live Now" (Trollope, Letters, v. 2, p. 730).
- 4 The allusion to Edith Wharton seems apt. Trollope
 dissects the marriage market in England as relentlessly
 and in much the same manner as Wharton criticizes New
 York society a quarter of a century later.
- 5 Anthony Trollope, The American Senator (New York:
 Dover, 1979), p. 13. All references to The American
 Senator are from this edition and will be cited
 parenthetically.
- 6 In a letter to Mary Holmes, Trollope expresses his
 contempt for Arabella's husband-hunting in terms of a
 general social criticism, a practice, Trollope says,
 "gaining ground in this country" (Letters, v. 2, p.
 702).
- 7 Trollope, Letters, v. 2, pp. 701-702.
- 8 Trollope, Letters, v. 2, p. 710.
- 9 Even five years earlier, in Lady Anna (1872), Trollope
 reinforces the value of love in marriage over mercenary
 considerations. Anna's social-climbing mother nearly
 tortures Anna to marry the lord. Anna, a good heroine,
 explores new heights in passive resistance, rejecting
 the socially prominent suitor for the tailor she loves.
- 10 Trollope, Letters, v. 2, p. 701.

Notes, Chapter Seven

- 1 Elizabeth Helsinger, Robin Lauterbach Sheets, William Veeder, The Woman Question: Literary Issues, 1837-1883 (New York: Garland Publishing, Inc., 1983), pp. xi-xvii.
- 2 Mary Elizabeth Braddon, Lady Audley's Secret (New York: Dover, 1974), pp. 250-51.
- 3 Mrs. Henry Wood, East Lynne (Bath: Cedric Chivers Ltd., 1974), p. 423.
- 4 Wilkie Collins, Armadale (New York: Dover, 1977), p. 464.
- 5 Thomas Hardy, Tess of the D'Urbervilles (New York: W.W. Norton, 1979), p. 236.

Bibliography

- Allen, Grant. The Woman Who Did. London: Roberts Bros. 1895.
- Altick, Rickard D. Victorian Studies in Scarlet. New York: W.W. Norton. 1970.
- Aitken, David. "Anthony Trollope on 'the Genus Girl.'" Nineteenth Century Fiction, 28:4 (1974), pp. 417-34.
- apRoberts, Ruth. "Anthony Trollope, or the Man with No Style at All." Victorian Newsletter, 35, pp. 10-23.
- apRoberts, Ruth. "Emily and Nora and Dorothy and Priscilla and Jemima and Carry." In The Victorian Experience: The Novelists. Ed. Richard A Levine. Columbus: Ohio State University Press. 1976.
- apRoberts, Ruth. The Moral Trollope. (Athens: Ohio Univ. Press). 1971.
- Auerbach, Nina. "The Rise of the Fallen Woman." Nineteenth Century Fiction, 35 (1980), pp. 29-54.
- Braddon, Mary Elizabeth. Lady Audley's Secret. New York: Dover. 1974.
- Branca, Patricia. Silent Sisterhood: Middle Class Women in the Victorian Home. Pittsburgh: Carnegie-Mellon Press. 1975.
- Buckley, Jerome H. "The Counterworld of Victorian Fiction in The Woman in White." In The Worlds of Victorian Fiction. Ed. U.C. Knoepfelmacher. Cambridge: Harvard Univ. Press. 1975.
- Cecil, David. Victorian Novelists. Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press. 1935
- Cohen, Joan Mandel. "Orley Farm: Pain, Reality and the Green World." In Form and Realism in Six Novels of Anthony Trollope. The Hague: Moriton. 1976.
- Collins, Philip. "Business and Bosoms: Some Trollopian Concerns." Nineteenth Century Fiction, 37, No. 3 (1982), pp. 293-315.
- Collins, Wilkie. Armada. New York: Dover. 1977.

- Collins, Wilkie. The Woman in White. Middlesex: Penguin. 1974.
- Girard, Rene. Deceit, Desire, and the Novel: Self and Others in Literary Structures. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press. 1961.
- Glavin, John. "Trollope's 'Most Natural English Girl.'" Nineteenth Century Fiction, 28: 3 (1973), pp. 477-485.
- Hapke, Laura. "The Lady as Criminal: Contradiction and Resolution in Trollope's Orley Farm." Victorian Newsletter, 66 (1984), pp. 18-21.
- Hardy, Thomas. Tess of the D'Urbervilles. New York: W.W. Norton. 1979.
- Hartman, Mary S. Victorian Murderesses: A True History of Thirteen Respectable French and English Women Accused of Unspeakable Crimes. New York: Schocken Books. 1977.
- Harvey, Geoffrey. "The Rhetoric of Orley Farm." In The Art of Anthony Trollope. London: Wedenfeld and Nicolson. 1980.
- Helsing, Elizabeth K., Robin Lauterbach Sheets, and William Veeder. The Woman Question: Literary Issues, 1837-1883. New York: Garland Publishers, Inc. 1983.
- Herbert, Christopher. "He Knew He Was Right, Mrs. Lynn Linton, and the Duplicities of the Victorian Marriage." Texas Studies in Literature and Language, 25, No. 3 (1983), pp. 448-469.
- Hughes, Winifred. The Maniac in the Cellar: Sensation Novels of the 1860s. Princeton: Princeton Univ. Press. 1980.
- James, Henry. "Anthony Trollope." In Partial Portraits. London: MacMillan. 1911.
- Kincaid, James R. The Novels of Anthony Trollope. Oxford: Clarendon Press. 1977.
- King, Margaret F. "Trollope's Orley Farm: Chivalry Versus Commercialism." Essays in Literature, 3 (1976-77), pp. 181-93.
- Lansbury, Carol. "The Multiple Transaction--Social Contracts--Law and Justice: Orley Farm." In The Reasonable Man: Trollope's Legal Fiction. Princeton: Princeton Univ. Press. 1981.

- Miller, J. Hillis. The Form of Victorian Fiction. South Bend: Notre Dame Univ. Press. 1968.
- McMaster, Juliet. "The Eustace Diamonds: 'What is Truth?' Said Jestling Pilate." In Trollope's Palliser Novels: Theme and Pattern. New York: Oxford Univ. Press. 1978.
- McMaster, R.D. "Women in The Way We Live Now." English Studies in Canada, 7, No. 1 (1981), pp. 68-80.
- Morse, Deborah Denenholz. Women in Trollope's Palliser Novels. Ann Arbor: UMI Research Press. 1987.
- Polhemus, Robert M. The Changing World of Anthony Trollope. Berkeley: Univ. of California Press. 1968.
- Reade, Charles. Griffith Gaunt, or Jealousy. London: Chatto and Windus. n.d. Originally published in 1877.
- Rose, Phyllis. Parallel Lives. New York: Vintage Books. 1983.
- Sadlier, Michael. Trollope: A Commentary. London: Constable and C. Ltd. 1927.
- Showalter, Elaine. A Literature of Their Own: British Women Novelists from Bronte to Lessing. Princeton: Princeton University Press. 1977.
- Showalter, Elaine. "Desperate Remedies: Sensation Novels of the 1860s." Victorian Newsletter, 49 (1976), pp. 1-5.
- Showalter, Elaine. "Family Secrets and Domestic Subversion: Rebellion in the Novels of the 1860s." In The Victorian Family: Structure and Stresses. Ed. Anthony S. Wohl. New York: St. Martin's Press. 1978.
- Slakey, Roger L. "Trollope's Case for the Moral Imperative." Nineteenth Century Fiction, 28:4 (1974), pp. 305-320.
- Stone, Donald D. The Romantic Impulse in Victorian Fiction. Cambridge: Harvard Univ. Press. 1980.
- Stubbs, Patricia. Women and Fiction: Feminism and the Novel, 1880-1920. Sussex: Harvester Press. 1979.
- Tracy, Robert. Trollope's Later Novels. Berkeley: Univ. of California Press. 1978.

- Trollope, Anthony. The American Senator. New York: Dover. 1979.
- Trollope, Anthony. An Autobiography. Berkeley: Univ of California Press. 1947.
- Trollope, Anthony. The Claverings. New York: Dover. 1977.
- Trollope, Anthony. The Eustace Diamonds. Middlesex: Penguin. 1973.
- Trollope, Anthony. Letters. Ed. John N. Hall. Stanford: Stanford Univ. Press. 1983.
- Trollope, Anthony. Orley Farm. New York: Dover. 1981.
- Trollope, Anthony. The Way We Live Now. Oxford: Oxford Univ. Press. 1982.
- Williams, Raymond. The Country and the City. New York: Oxford Univ. Press. 1973.
- Wood, Mrs. Henry. East Lynne. Bath: Cedric Chivers Ltd. 1974.

MICHIGAN STATE UNIV. LIBRARIES



31293005824648